The Complete Works Of
John Webster

Edited by F. L. Lucas

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THE COMPLETE WORKS OF JOHN WEBSTER

VOLUME I

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF JOHN WEBSTER

Edited by

F. L. LUCAS
FELLOW OF KING'S COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE

Volume I

General Introduction
The White Devil

BOSTON & NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
1928

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY W. LEWIS, M.A.
AT THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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To

JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES

PREFACE

I should like to begin by expressing my indebtedness to Mr A. F. Scholfield, the Cambridge University Librarian, who first suggested to me that I should edit Webster, years before it seemed likely that an opportunity would ever really occur; to Messrs Chatto and Windus, whose unfailing kindness has made the work both possible and as easy as possible; and to Mr H. Dugdale Sykes, who has given most valuable criticism and advice and very generously placed at my disposal his manuscript notes on the two great tragedies, *The Devil's Law-Case*, and *Appius and Virginia*. In using these it has seemed to me best to form my own conclusions on each passage before turning to his; whatever additional information I derive from him is followed in the Commentary by the initials H.D.S. Every student of Webster must further owe a very great deal to his penetrating articles on questions of authorship in *Notes and Queries* and his *Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama*. I am also greatly indebted to Professor H. D. Gray of Stanford University, Columbia, U.S.A., who kindly allowed me to see copies of his important papers on the authorship of *A Cure for a Cuckold* and *Appius and Virginia* before their publication and just in time for me to discuss them here. There are other names, living and dead, that no editor of Webster can forget—Dyce, Symonds, Gosse, Stoll, Sampson and, lastly, Rupert Brooke. On the literary side Webster's youngest critic—Rupert Brooke will always remain that—is still, I think, his best. *John Webster and the Elizabethan Drama* is indeed a very youthful book: that is why it is so good. Its author had not time to amass the mountainous erudition which goes with much modern study of the Elizabethans: but another quality, rarer in commentators and even more essential here, he did possess—he was alive to the finger-tips. And accordingly he not only did his share in clearing up the facts of Webster's work: he seems to me to have done more than anyone else to place that work, without exaggerating its faults or ignoring them, in its just position among the lasting possessions of English literature. From the exclamations of Lamb and the roarings of Swinburne on the one hand, as from the outcries of Kingsley and Archer and

Shaw on the other, it is to him that one learns to come back in search of sanity.

Lastly it goes without saying that anyone engaged on work like this must be deeply indebted to the *New English Dictionary*. I mention it here once for all, as I have not thought it necessary in the notes to name it each time I have used its authority. It has, as it happens, unduly neglected Webster; but the more one uses it, the more one appreciates its monumental worth.

I should like, further, to express my thanks to the Henry Huntington Library, San Gabriel, California, for generously allowing me a rotograph reproduction of its unique copy of the *Monuments of Honour*; to the British Museum Library for giving every facility in obtaining similar reproductions of the first editions of all Webster's other works; to Herr Leo Weinrich for his help in hunting down rare German dissertations; and to my father and Mr John Hayward, the youthful and learned editor of Rochester, for their valuable assistance in the very considerable labour of reading the proofs. If the task was ungrateful, at least the author is not.

I have tried to remember that an edition of this kind has two masters to serve, the general reader and the learned; and that of these the first must by right stand first[1]. In other words, my object above all else has been, if I may adapt a phrase of Matthew Arnold's, "to get Webster enjoyed". There is no need to labour the point; it is mentioned here, because it has governed the arrangement of this work as a whole. For the general reader wants, above all, a clear text that he can read not only with confidence but with pleasure; and accordingly the notes have been banished from the foot of the page, where they are always hideous and often distracting, to the end of the book. Again, the general reader does not want the explanatory notes that everyone needs, to be mixed up with variant readings of interest only to the scholar; and so the Commentary has been made separate from the Textual Notes. This practice does not commend itself to some; but I cannot help remembering that protest of Sainte-Beuve—"Ah! messieurs les éditeurs, vous abusez bien de notre culte pour les papiers-brouillons!—Corrigez, réparez les textes,

[1] Those who feel any doubt whether or no Webster himself would have favoured this view may perhaps be referred to *The Duchess of Malfi*, III. 3. 50 ff.

nous vous en saurons gré; mais faut-il donc pour cela que vous nous fassiez repasser avec vous par toutes les ratures?" Since, however, the intelligent reader may well be interested in the few main *cruces* of a text, the most important of the Textual Notes are distinguished by an asterisk[1]. On the other hand, I have avoided Glossaries; a Glossary saves a certain amount of repetition by explaining words once for all, instead of each time they occur; but this saving is really inconsiderable, and no one not a professional juggler enjoys trying to read a book continuously in three places at once. An Index has however been added to the Commentary which I hope may prove useful for purposes of reference.

As regards the improprieties in the text, I make no apology for explaining them where obscure. Had Webster been a Greek or Roman classic, that would be taken for granted; no editor casts a veil over the jests of Aristophanes. And rightly; it is the business of an author to be understood, and of an editor to see that he is. In English scholarship, however, a less honest tradition prevails: and it is often assumed to be better to leave a sentence apparently pointless than to reveal the awful fact that its point is improper. Yet this only leads to muddle and misconception—to such nonsense as Swinburne's designation of Webster as "the cleanliest of the Elizabethans", to Stoll's praise of him as happily exempt from the indecency of his contemporaries. This simply is not true; just as it is not true of Shakespeare; why, then, pretend?

The text itself is left as near as possible to the original form in each case; all verbal alterations or additions being enclosed in square brackets, and omissions marked by the symbol ∧ .

It is becoming more and more customary, in reprinting the older English authors, to keep the old spelling; and though some readers still hate it, I cannot but feel that the gain is a real one. There remains, of course, the danger that we may come in this way to see the Elizabethans through a sentimental rainbow-mist of quaintness; but so much the worse for the reader who lets that happen to him. It is impossible, on the other hand, to

[1] For the chief alterations made or suggested in the present text see the Textual Notes on *W.D.* I. 1. 62; II. 1. 81; III. 1. 53; III. 2. 237; V. 1. 201; V. 6. 133: *D.L.* III. 2. 90: *C.C.* I. 1. 205; II. 3. 111; IV. 1. 115; IV. 2. 165: *A.V.* III. 1. 22; III. 4. 31: *Mon. Col.* 58: *Char.* "Intruder into Favour", 23; "Rimer", 1: *A.Q.L.* IV. 1. 173.

turn from one of the charming original Quartos of Shakespeare or Webster to a modernized text without feeling, as in the presence of a restored and scraped medieval building, that something essential and living has been pared and smoothed away with that rugged, arbitrary, capricious "orthographie" of Jacobean England. Its "wild civility" suits it so well. The spelling may often be, as there is reason to think, more the compositor's than the author's[1]: but it is in keeping, and it has an unruly vitality which our stereotyped correctitude has lost. It is the difference between a modern town, planned in rectangular deserts, and a medieval labyrinth of lanes. There is little aesthetic point, it may seem, in that extraordinary capriciousness which in the play of *Sir Thomas More*, for instance, somehow succeeds in spelling the hero's name in no less than three different ways within the limits of a single line. But it remains very typical of the wayward mentality of an age whose spiritual difference from our own we neither can nor should forget.

Similarly the original punctuation is changed as little as possible, compatibly with the modern reader's comfort. There is, I know, a tendency in some quarters at the moment to regard Elizabethan punctuation as a sacred product of inspiration, an Ark which it is impious and fatal even to touch. As a reaction from the old view of Elizabethan punctuation as mere madness without method, this superstition is natural enough; but it is not more sensible on that account. That the Elizabethans had a definite theory of stopping, and a good one, is, thanks largely to Mr Percy Simpson, now well known; but their practice remained often very inaccurate, and an editor's business is both to respect their theory and to suspect their practice, in the resolve that at all costs his readers shall never be bewildered. For to have to check oneself in the midst of poetry, and pickle about commas and clauses, is insufferable. The system on which slight modifications

[1] See, in particular, an interesting comparison by W. W. Greg in *The Library* for 1923–4 (IV. 102 ff.) between the manuscript and the printed text of Harington's *Ariosto*. The printer freely modernizes spelling and punctuation, while tending, however, to leave unaltered anything strikingly unusual. Valuable further evidence is given by A. W. Pollard and M. St C. Byrne in the same periodical, IV. 1–23 (1923–4); V. 243–8 (1924–5). The rapidly succeeding reprints of "Overbury's" *Characters* provide a good example of the extreme liberties compositors were apt to take with the punctuation of their copy.

have been introduced, where necessary, in the punctuation, is explained in the Introduction to the Textual Notes.

With these exceptions, then, the original text has been left practically untouched. My rule has been—"As little alteration as possible: but no ambiguity". Thus "their", for "there", if the context admits of a moment's uncertainty, is changed to "the[re]"; but "Oowle" can only mean "owl" and is far too expressive to be given up. This means, in practice, very few changes indeed. No doubt little is gained by faithfully reprinting, for instance, "I'll'd" or "i'th" or "ith'" or "ith"; but certainly nothing is lost. Similarly where a verse is broken up between two or more speakers, the Quartos print the fragments sometimes on a level, sometimes on separate lines, quite inconsistently; but there too the present text follows them, except where their line-division is (as very often) definitely wrong. And though misprints in a work of this size are hardly to be avoided altogether, I hope that the reader, when something rather *bizarre* strikes his eye, will not too hastily assign it to that cause.

Stage directions, again, have been kept down to a minimum. The exaggerated bump of locality displayed by most modern editions of the old drama is not merely needless, but misleading on a stage where the actual place is so often indefinite, and may even shift imperceptibly, while a scene progresses, under the very feet of the characters and eyes of the audience. The Elizabethans were vividly aware that they were in the theatre: where exactly the characters were, concerned them less. We too should imagine ourselves in an Elizabethan theatre; and attempts to make stage directions too precise or to prettify them, as has been done recently, with word-paintings of the landscape of Prospero's Island or Hero's garden, are merely distracting. We cannot go to see Shakespeare or Webster at The Globe. But to appreciate their skill as playwrights it is their stage at The Globe, not magic lawns or pleached alleys, that we should try to picture as we read; and what we want to know is, not by which route the Duchess came from the Palace in Amalfi to her grave in Milan, but how the transition was managed from this scene to that; or in what part of the stage—Study or Balcony or Apron —such or such an episode took place. Accordingly, in the Commentary at the beginning of each scene I have tried, very tentatively, to suggest what portion of the stage it occupied, and

thereby its *liaison*, the acting being *largely* continuous, with the scenes before and after. For the Elizabethan theatre, with its swift smooth changes from Apron to Study and Balcony to Apron, was a delicate instrument, and there is genuine beauty at times in the skill with which its playwrights handle it.

The only other question has been the inclusion or exclusion of certain works not wholly or certainly Webster's. Were the plays he wrote in his apprenticeship under Dekker—*Sir Thomas Wyat*, *Westward Ho!*, and *Northward Ho!*—to find a place here? There seems only one answer, if we take a wide view of the future of Elizabethan Drama and the need for co-ordination in its editing. Clearly it is ridiculous to go on duplicating plays written in collaboration—to print *Eastward Ho!*, for instance, over and over again, in every edition either of Chapman, or of Marston, or of Jonson that appears. This consideration applies even more forcibly to editions with an elaborate commentary; and the sensible course is clearly that whenever it is agreed which playwright had the lion's share in a play, precedence should be given to the lion and the play printed with *his* works, not with his subordinate's. Accordingly these three plays in which Webster is, by common consent, only a minor partner, are not included here. Their proper place is in complete editions of Dekker: Webster's share in them will be found briefly discussed in an Appendix. There are, however, other doubtful plays more difficult to assign—*Anything for a Quiet Life*, usually attributed to Middleton, and *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, hitherto included in the collected Beaumont and Fletcher; both of which Mr Sykes has argued to be principally Webster's. That Webster had a considerable hand in them Mr Sykes seems to me to have established beyond doubt; but after all that is merely my own opinion. His theories have yet to stand the test of time: and unless editors are conservative in such cases, we shall be faced with chaos. On the other hand, these two plays seemed likely to add considerably, by their very difference from Webster's best known work, to the interest of this edition. And so I have compromised and printed them here in smaller type without giving them so full a Commentary as the undoubted works. The same course has been followed with those Characters in the "Overbury" collection which, as Baron A. F. Bourgeois first suggested, seem to have been contributed by Webster.

I must apologise for the length of these explanations. The wish that this edition may be as pleasant and useful as possible makes me anxious that at least the aim of its details should be clear. It has been an enviable privilege to re-edit Webster; despite the inevitable drudgery, it has seemed so well worth doing. For a new edition was certainly needed, whether this one meets that need or no: it is all but a century since the first complete edition, that of Dyce, and just seventy years since its only and very inferior successor, that of W. C. Hazlitt. If this one serves half as long, it will have fulfilled its end.

F. L. L.

KING'S COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE
April 1927

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SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. WEBSTER IN GENERAL
II. SEPARATE WORKS OF WEBSTER

Unless otherwise stated, the place of publication is London.)

I. WEBSTER IN GENERAL

A. Complete Editions

1830. A. Dyce. *The Works of J. Webster.* (Reprinted 1857.)
1857. W. C. Hazlitt. *The Dramatic Works of J. Webster.* (Reprinted 1897.) (For the most part a very inferior copy of Dyce and textually of slight importance.)

B. General Criticism, etc.

(General literary histories etc. are included when their treatment of Webster seems particularly important.)

1675. E. Phillips. *Theatrum Poetarum.*
1687. W. Winstanley. *Lives of the most famous English poets.*
1691. G. Langbaine. *Account of the English Dramatic Poets.* (Re-edited by C. Gildon as *The Lives of the Poets*, 1698.)
1808. C. Lamb. *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets.*
1821. W. Hazlitt. *Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth.*
1823. *Retrospective Review*, VII. 87 ff. "J. Webster." (Of no great interest.)
1833. "J. M." in *Gentleman's Magazine*, CIII. 414 ff., 489 ff. (A review of Dyce's edition.)
1837–9. H. Hallam. *Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries.* (Short, but sensible on W.)
1858–60. F. M. von Bodenstedt. *Shakespeares Zeitgenossen und ihre Werke.* Vol. I. Berlin.
1859. C. Kingsley. *Miscellanies.* II. "Plays and Puritans." (Illuminatingly Victorian.)
1863–4. H. A. Taine. *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise.* Paris.
1864. A. Mézières. *Contemporains et Successeurs de Shakespeare.* Paris. (4th ed. 1897.)
1864. *Shakespeare and Jonson: Dramatic, versus Wit-Combats.*
(This is a mere curiosity, but a curious one. Its anonymous author sees Elizabethan Drama as a battlefield of Shakespeare

and Jonson, and finds keys to its characters accordingly: *e.g.* Vittoria represents Marston's Muse (and also Lady Essex); Francisco, Beaumont (and Raleigh); Marcello, Shakespeare; Flamineo, Jonson; Brachiano, Fletcher. Similarly Icilius is Shakespeare; M. Clodius, Jonson; Appius, Marston; Virginia, the Classic Muse!)

1875. A. W. Ward. *English Dramatic Literature.* (Revised ed. 1899.)
1881. R. Prölss. *Geschichte des neueren Dramas.* Leipzig.
1883. Sir Edmund Gosse. *Seventeenth Century Studies.*
1886. A. C. Swinburne. "John Webster" in *Nineteenth Century* (June). (Reprinted in *The Age of Shakespeare,* 1908.)
1887. G. Saintsbury. *Elizabethan Literature.*
1887. C. Vopel. *J. Webster.* Bremen. (Dissertation.) (Of very slight value.)
1892. J. R. Lowell. *The Old English Dramatists.*
1893. W. Archer. "Webster, Lamb, and Swinburne" in *New Review,* VIII. 96 ff. (The first of Archer's onslaughts.)
1893. Sir William Watson. *Excursions in Criticism.* "Some Literary Idolatries." (To be read side by side with Kingsley's earlier cry of outraged morality.)
1893. A. F. von Schack. *Die englischen Dramatiker vor, neben, und nach Shakespeare.* Stuttgart.
1893. M. Meiners. *Metrische Untersuchungen über den Dramatiker, J. Webster.* Halle. (Too curious in its ideas of English metre to be of use.)
1894. A. C. Swinburne. *Studies in Prose and Poetry.* (Contains reprint of his article on Webster in *Encycl. Britann.* Of slight value.)
1894. Sir Edmund Gosse. *The Jacobean Poets.*
1894–1904. J. J. Jusserand. *Histoire Littéraire du Peuple Anglais.* Paris. (Engl. transl. 1895–1909, 1926: reff. in the text are to the earlier ed.)
1895. F. I. Carpenter. *Metaphor and Simile in the Minor Elizabethan Poets.* Chicago.
1895–1910. W. J. Courthope. *A History of English Poetry.*
1896. K. Deighton. *The Old Dramatists. Conjectural Readings.*
1898. W. von Wurzbach. "J. Webster" in *Jahrbuch der deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft* (Weimar), XXXIV. 9–51. (Worthless.)
1899. Sir Sidney Lee. Article in *Dict. Nat. Biog.* (Out of date.)
1902. J. Morris. "J. Webster" in *Fortnightly Review* (June).
1904. A. C. Swinburne. Sonnet on J. Webster (in *Poetical Works,* vol. V).
1905. E. E. Stoll. *J. Webster.* Boston. (Though sometimes over-strained, a monument of learning.)
1906–7. C. Crawford. *Collectanea.* (Two Series.) "Webster and Sidney" in the First Series: "Webster, Marston, Montaigne, Donne etc." in the Second. (Reprints from *Notes and Queries,* 1904. Very important.)

1906. L. J. Sturge. "Webster and the Law" in *Jhrb. der deutsch. Sh.-Gesellsch.* (Weimar), XLII. 148–57. (A discussion of Webster's legal knowledge.)
1907. O. Schröder. *Marlowe und Webster.* Halle. (Dissertation.)
1908. A. C. Swinburne. *The Age of Shakespeare.* (The essay on Webster is a revision of the article in *Nineteenth Century* for June 1886.)
1908. F. E. Schelling. *Elizabethan Drama.* Boston and New York.
1908. P. Krusius. *Eine Untersuchung der Sprache J. Webster's.* Halle. (Dissertation.)
1909. J. le G. Brereton. *Elizabethan Drama.* Sydney. (Reprints a revised version of his review of Sampson in *Hermes*, Nov. 1905.)
1910. C. E. Vaughan. "Tourneur and Webster" in *Cambridge History of Eng. Lit.* vol. VI. Cambridge.
1914. Baron A. F. Bourgeois. "Webster and the *N.E.D.*" in *Notes and Queries*, 11th Series, vols. IX.–X.
1916. Rupert Brooke. *J. Webster and the Elizabethan Drama.* (Far the best book on its subject for the general reader.)
1923. W. Archer. *The Old Drama and the New.* (Contains a final assault on Webster.)

II. SEPARATE WORKS OF WEBSTER

(This is, of course, only *supplementary* to I.)

A. *Sir Thomas Wyat*, *Westward Ho!*, *Northward Ho!*

1. EDITIONS

1607. *The Famous History of Sir Thomas Wyat. With the Coronation of Queen Mary, and the coming in of King Philip. As it was plaied by the Queens Maiesties Servants. Written by Thomas Dickers and John Webster. London. 1607.* 4to. (Another ed. 1612. Reprinted in W. J. Blew, *Two Old Plays*, 1876.)
1607. *West-ward Hoe. As it hath beene divers times Acted by the Children of Paules. Written by Tho: Decker, and John Webster. 1607.* 4to.
1607. *North-ward Hoe. Sundry times Acted by the Children of Paules. By Thomas Decker, and John Webster. 1607.* 4to.

2. CRITICISM

1909. F. E. Pierce. *The Collaboration of Webster and Dekker.* New York.
1911. M. L. Hunt. *Thomas Dekker.* Columbia University.

B. *The White Devil*

I. EDITIONS

1612. See title-page, p. 105.

1631. *The White Devil, Or, The Tragedy of Paulo Giordano Ursini, Duke of Brachiano, With the Life, And Death, of Vittoria Corombona, the Famous Venetian Curtizan. As it hath bin divers times Acted, by the Queenes Maiesties servants, at the Phoenix, in Drury Lane. Written by John Webster. Non inferiora secutus. London. Printed by I. N. for Hugh Perry, and are to be sold at his shop at the sign of the Harrow in Brittains-burse. 1631.* 4to.

1665. *The White Devil, Or, Vittoria Corombona, A Lady of Venice. A Tragedy. By John Webster. Acted (formerly by Her Majesties Servants) at the Phoenix in Drury Lane; And At This Present (by His now Majesties) at the Theatre Royal. Non inferiora secutus. London, printed by G. Miller for John Playfere, at the White Lion, in the Upper Walk of the New Exchange, and William Crooke at the Three Bibles on Fleet Bridge. 1665.* 4to.

1672. *Vittoria Corombona, Or, The White Devil. A Tragedy. By J. Webster. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal, By His Majesties Servants. Printed for William Crooke, at the Green Dragon without Temple Bar. 1672.* 4to.

1707. *Injur'd Love: Or, The Cruel Husband. A Tragedy. Design'd to be Acted at the Theatre Royal. Written by Mr. N. Tate, Author of the Tragedy call'd King Lear. Richard Wellington.* (A shameless garbling of the play without so much as a mention of Webster's name.)

1744. In Dodsley's *Old Plays*, III. 313–412. (Reprinted 1780, VI. 233–374, with notes by Reed; 1825, VI. 203–326, with notes by Reed, Gilchrist, and Collier.)

1810. In *The Ancient British Drama*, III. 1–46.

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1888. In Mermaid Series *Webster and Tourneur*. (Edited by J. A. Symonds; 2nd ed. 1903.)

1904. In M. W. Sampson, *The White Devil and The Duchess of Malfy*. Boston and London. (A useful and charming little book.)

1904. Translated in R. Prölss, *Alt-englisches Theater*, I. Leipzig.

1912. A. H. Thorndike. *Webster and Tourneur*. New York. (Contains *W.D.*, *D.M.*, *A. V.*, and *Revenger's Tragedy*.)

1916. I. A. Aksenov. *Elizabethanski*. Moscow. (A volume of translations into Russian, including one of *W.D.*)

1922. Translated in C. Cé, *Le Démon Blanc et la Duchesse d'Amalfi*. Paris.

2. SOURCES, CRITICISM, ETC.

(a) Accounts of the historical Vittoria

1586. *Il miserabile e compassionevole caso della morte dell' illustrissima Signora Vittoria Accoramboni.* Anon: Brescia. (Like Stoll, I have failed to trace a copy.)

1586. G. B. Brendola. *Sonetto e canzone, fatti nella morte dell' illustrissima Signora Corambona.* Brescia. (Of no interest.)

——. "Cronaca del Anonimo del Campidoglio." (Reprinted by F. Odorici, Brescia, 1862, under the title *Vittoria Accoramboni dalle inedite Memorie del Pontificato di Sisto V esistenti nella bresciana biblioteca.*)

(Stoll suggests (p. 84) that this may have been Webster's source, though he had himself failed to find either the original or Odorici's reprint in all the libraries he searched. A copy of the reprint, however, exists in the Cambridge University Library; it does not seem the sole source, *e.g.* it omits "*manet alta mente repostum*" which I have not found earlier than Tempesti (see below). But though not very full, it is fairly accurate: and gives, according to Gnoli, the best account of the earlier part of the story—the murder of Peretti, etc. A version of it will be found in Reumont, *Römische Briefe von einem Florentiner*, Leipzig, 1840–4, IV. 273–300.)

——. *Diverse Relazioni di Giustizie seguite nel Pontificato di Sisto V.* (Brit. Mus. Egerton MS. 1100; also gives a full, but not altogether accurate account of earlier episodes of the story. Not known to previous editors.)

1596. C. Campana. *Historie del Mundo.* Venice. Pp. 171–2.

1598. A. Riccoboni. *De Gymnasio Padovano.* Padua. P. 132.

1604–9. Thuanus (De Thou). *Historia.* Paris. (See vol. IV. Bk. LXXXII. p. 42, in ed. of 1626.)

1615. De Rosset. *Histoires Tragiques de nostre Temps.* Paris. Hist. XV. (A romanticized version with changed names and of little value: *e.g.* it suggests that Lodovico was a repulsed lover of Vittoria and killed her out of jealousy.)

For contemporary documents such as Ambassadors' despatches, *Avvisi di Roma*, etc., see F. Mutinelli, *Storia arcana e aneddotica d'Italia* (Venice, 1855–8), I.; Gnoli; and Von Huebner.

1754. C. Tempesti. *Storia della Vita e Geste di Sisto V.* Rome. (Reprinted 1866.)

1840. J. L. Tieck. *Vittoria Accorombona.* Breslau. (A silly novel with a sentimental whitewashing of Vittoria.)

1855. Stendhal. *Chroniques Italiennes.* Paris. (Previously published in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1837: and translated from a not very accurate old MS. account.)

1860. T. A. Trollope. "Vittoria Accoramboni" in *All the Year Round*,

II. 296 ff. (Based largely on Tempesti, and very circumstantial; but partly inaccurate, and facetiously vulgar.)
1870. D. Gnoli. *Vittoria Accoramboni*. Florence. (The standard work on the subject, worth all the other accounts put together.)
1872. J. A. von Huebner. *Life and Times of Sixtus V.* (Eng. transl. of Fr. ed. of 1870, Paris.) I. 195, 228 ff.
1883. J. A. Symonds. *Italian Byways*. (Contains a vivid account of Vittoria, repeated in his *Renaissance in Italy* (*The Catholic Reaction*, vol. I.), and his *Sketches and Studies in Italy and Greece*, 2nd Series.)
1899. M. Maitland, in *Nineteenth Century* (Jan.). (Another attempt to whitewash Vittoria, and historically worthless.)
1902. Countess Martinengo-Cesaresco. *Lombard Studies*.
1902. M. Landau. "Vittoria Accorambona in der Dichtung im Verhältnis zu ihrer wahren Geschichte" in *Euphorion* (Leipzig), IX. 310–16.
1903. F. M. Crawford. *Ave Roma Immortalis*. (Inaccurate.)
1911. Laura MacCracken. *A Page of Forgotten History*. (Taken without acknowledgment from Gnoli, whose statements are occasionally quoted as from "the old chronicler"!)
1924. *The Fugger News-letters*. Edited by V. von Klarwill. (Eng. transl.) P. 85.

(b) Criticism

1651. S. Sheppard. *Epigrams theological, philosophical, and romantic.* (Contains the lines on the play quoted on p. 101.)
1818. "H. M." "*The White Devil*" in *Blackwood's* (Edinburgh), III. 556–62. (Of no value.)
1900. W. W. Greg. "Webster's *White Devil*" in *Mod. Lang. Quart.* III. 112–25.
1907. P. Simpson. "An Allusion in Webster" in *Mod. Lang. Rev.* II. 162.
1913. H. D. Sykes. "The Date of Webster's Play, *The White Devil*" in *Notes and Queries*, 11. VII. 342.

C. *The Duchess of Malfi*

I. EDITIONS

1623. See title-page, II. 29.
1640. *The Dutchesse of Malfy. A Tragedy. As it was approvedly well acted at the Black-Friers, By his Majesties Servants. The perfect and exact Copy, with divers things Printed, that the length of the Play would not beare in the Presentment. Written by John Webster. Horat.—Si quid—Candidus Imperti si non his utere mecum. London: Printed by I. Raworth, for I. Benson, And are to be sold at his shop in St. Dunstans Churchyard in Fleetstreet. 1640.* 4to.

c. 1664[1]. *The Dutchesse of Malfy. A Tragedy. As it was Acted by his late Majesties S[er][2]vants at Black Fryers with great Applause, Thirty Years since. And now Acted by his Highnesse the Duke of York's Servants. The perfect and exact Copy, with divers things prin[ted][2] that the length of the Play would not bear in the Presentment. Written by John Webster. Horat.—Si quid—Candidus Imperti si non his utere mecum. London. Printed for Robert Crofts, and are to be sold at his Shop, a[t the][2] Crown in Chancery lane. Price 1s.* 4to.

(A unique (?) copy of this is in the Harvard University Library. The Librarian, Mr G. P. Winship, to whose kindness I am indebted for the above title, informs me that it consists simply of the sheets of the 1640 edition (the sale of which was doubtless hindered by political troubles) bound up with a fresh title-page, which no longer has the list of actors on its reverse. He did indeed find one difference. The Harvard 1640, on sig. E1, misprints the first word "Sh'll" for "She'll" and omits the E: and he suggested that this might be due to variation between different copies of 1640. He was right. Both Brit. Mus. copies of 1640 have this page correctly, as in 1664.)

1678. *The Dutchess of Malfey: A Tragedy. As it is now Acteed* (sic) *At The Dukes Theater. Printed for D.N. and T.C. and are to be Sold by Simon Neale.*

1708. *The Unfortunate Dutchess of Malfy, Or, The Unnatural Brothers: A Tragedy. Now Acted at the Queen's Theatre in the Hay-Market, By Her Majesties Company of Comedians. Written by Mr. Webster. Printed for H.N. and are to be Sold by John Morphew.*

1735. *The Fatal Secret. A Tragedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal, In Covent-Garden. By Mr. Theobald...Printed for J. Watts; and Sold by W. Feales....*

(Webster's authorship stated in preface: a typical eighteenth-century adaptation—

> with friendly Chains
> Such as a prudent Parent, soft and mild,
> Tho' griev'd, yet forc'd, puts on a Frantick Child.

The madmen are abolished, the Duchess never murdered (a wax image being substituted in her place to deceive Ferdinand), the ending made happy, the metre smoothed, and the "Frantick Child", in short, left completely inanimate.)

[1] The Quarto is undated. Sampson provisionally assigned it to *c.* 1660. But the performance at Lincoln's Inn Fields seems to belong to *c.* 1664 (Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*); which is also the year in which according to Plomer's *Dict. of Printers* Crofts appears to have given up business.

[2] Edge of title cut.

1810. In *The Ancient British Drama*, III. 508–43. (Based on 1640.)
1851. *The Duchess of Malfi*. (Tallis's Acting Drama, Part I.) London and New York. (Altered and expurgated by R. H. Horne, the author of *Orion*. Indeed the play is garbled out of recognition, without a whisper that it is anything but a genuine reprint.)
1858–60. Translated by F. M. von Bodenstedt in *Shakespeares Zeitgenossen und ihre Werke* (Berlin), vol. I.
1865. Translated by E. Lafond. (See under *White Devil*, 1865.)
1870. In *The Works of the British Dramatists*, edited by J. S. Keltie, Edinburgh, pp. 317–45.
1883 (?). *The Duchess of Malfi. By John Webster*. Dicks' Standard Plays, No. 350. (Price 1*d*.)
1888. In Mermaid Series. (See under *White Devil*, 1888.)
1892. In *The Best Elizabethan Plays*, edited by W. R. Thayer, Boston. (Expurgated.)
1896. *The Duchess of Malfi*. Edited by C. E. Vaughan. (Temple Dramatists.)
1904. Edited by Sampson. (See under *White Devil*, 1904.)
1911. In *The Chief English Dramatists*, edited by W. A. Neilson.
1912. Edited by A. H. Thorndike. (See under *White Devil*, 1912.)
1915. In *Six Plays by Contemporaries of Shakespeare*, edited by C. B. Wheeler. (World's Classics.)
1920. *La Duquesa de Malfi*. Translated by E. Díez-Canedo. Madrid, Barcelona.
1921. *The Duchess of Malfi*. Edited by F. Allen.
1922. Translated by Cé. (See under *White Devil*, 1922.)

2. SOURCES, CRITICISM, ETC.

(a) Accounts of the historical events.

–1511. Notar Giacomo. *Cronica di Napoli*. (Printed at Naples, 1845.)
1554–73. M. Bandello. *Novelle*. Lucca and Lyons. I. 26. (A good modern edition was published at Bari, 1910.)
1565. F. de Belle-forest. *Histoires Tragiques*. Vol. II. Paris.
1567. W. Painter. *Palace of Pleasure*. Vol. II. (Edited by J. Jacobs, 1890.)
1597. T. Beard. *Theatre of God's Judgements*.
1600. S. Goulart. *Histoires Admirables et Memorables de Nostre Temps*. Paris, 1600. 2nd ed. Rouen, 1606.
1607. E. Grimeston. *Admirable and Memorable Histories*. (Transl. of the preceding.) P. 364.
1618. Lope de Vega. "*El Mayordomo della Duquesa d'Amalfi*" in *Doze Comedias de Lope de Vega Carpio...Onzena Parte*. Barcelona. (Written before 1609.)
1881. M. Camera. *Memorie storico-diplomatiche della città di Amalfi*. Salerno.

1895. K. Kiesow. "Die verschiedenen Bearbeitungen der Novelle von der Herzogin von Amalfi des Bandello in den Literaturen des XVI und XVII Jahrhunderts" in *Anglia* (Halle), XVII. 199–258.
1906. D. Morellini. *Giovanna d' Aragona, Duchessa d' Amalfi.* Cesena (The standard book on the Duchess of Amalfi, as Gnoli's on Vittoria.)

(b) Criticism

1818. "H.M." "*The Duchess of Malfy*" in *Blackwood's*, II. 656 ff.
1893. W. Poel. "A New Criticism of Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*" in *Library Review* (March).
1899. A. C. Swinburne. "Prologue to *The Duchess of Malfi*" in *Nineteenth Century* (Jan.).
1909. C. W. Wallace. Letters to *The Times* on date of Ostler's death (Oct. 2nd and 4th).
1919. W. J. Lawrence. "The Date of *The Duchess of Malfi*" in *Athenaeum* (Nov. 21st).
1920. W. Archer. "*The Duchess of Malfi*" in *Nineteenth Century* (Jan.).
1925. F. Olivero. "*La Duchessa di Amalfi di John Webster*" in *Rivista d' Italia* (March).

D. *The Devil's Law-Case*

1. EDITIONS

1623. See title-page, II. 231.

E. *A Cure for a Cuckold*

1. EDITIONS

1661. See title-page, III. 27.
1885. *Love's Graduate.* Oxford. (The main plot alone, privately printed by S. Spring-Rice, with introduction by Sir Edmund Gosse.)

2. CRITICISM

1907. F. Tischner. *Die Verfasserschaft der Webster-Rowley-Dramen.* Marburg. (Dissertation.)
1910. C. W. Stork. *All's Lost by Lust and A Shoemaker, a Gentleman.* Philadelphia. (With a general introduction on Rowley.)
1914. H. D. Sykes. "Webster's Share in *A Cure for a Cuckold*" in *Notes and Queries*, 11. IX.
1927. H. D. Gray. "*A Cure for a Cuckold.* By Heywood, Rowley, and Webster" in *Mod. Lang. Rev.* (Forthcoming.)

F. *Appius and Virginia*

1. EDITIONS

1654. See title-page, III. 151. (Re-issued in 1659, with new title-page, "Printed for Humphrey Moseley"; and again in 1679 as "Acted at the Duke's Theatre under the name of The Roman Virgin or Unjust Judge"[1]. Dodsley, *Old English Plays* (1780), VI. 237, mentions a second Quarto of 1655. But I can find no trace of this: and suspect "1655" to be a mistake for "1659", which he does not mention.)

1815. In Dilke's *Old English Plays*, vol. V.

1890. Translated in Gelbke, *Die englische Bühne zu Shakespeares Zeit* (Leipzig).

1912. Edited by A. H. Thorndike. (See under *White Devil*, 1912.)

2. CRITICISM

1899. J. Lauschke. *J. Webster's Tragödie Appius und Virginia.* Potsdam. (Dissertation.)

1913–4. H. D. Sykes. "The Date of *Appius and Virginia*" in *Notes and Queries*, II. VII.–VIII.

1921. A. M. Clark. "The Authorship of *Appius and Virginia*" in *Mod. Lang. Rev.* XVI. (Jan.).

1924. H. D. Sykes. *Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama.* "Webster's *Appius and Virginia*: A Vindication."

1927. H. D. Gray. "*Appius and Virginia.* By Webster and Heywood" in *Studies in Philol.* XXIV. (April).

G. *A Monumental Column*

1. EDITIONS

1613. See title-page, III. 271. Also published in *Three Elegies on the most lamented Death of Prince Henrie,*

The first } *written by* { *Cyril Tourneur.*
The second } { *John Webster.*
The third } { *Tho. Heywood.*

London. Printed for William Welbie. 1613. 4to.

[1] There is still much confusion about this 1679 re-issue. Dyce (*Webster*, p. 147) states the facts correctly—it consists of the old sheets with a new title-page. But the Bodleian copy has on its fly-leaf a note by Malone, as follows: "Langbaine says he was told by Cartwright the comedian that this play of Webster's was altered by Betterton on its revival at the Duke's Theatre. This therefore is Betterton's alteration. The original edition was printed in 1654. M." That Betterton altered the play when it was acted in 1669 is likely enough: there is apparently a pun on *The Roman Virgin* in Rochester's sneer that Betterton "had MAID plays as well as the best"

H. *Monuments of Honour*

1. EDITIONS

1624. See title-page, III. 313. (The only known copy, once in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire, is now in the Henry Huntington Library, San Gabriel, California.)

I. *The Induction to The Malcontent*

1. EDITIONS

1604. See III 294, 296.
1887. In Bullen's *Marston*.

J. The 1615 additions to "Overbury's" *Characters*.

1. EDITIONS

1615. See title-page, IV. 21. (Sixth Edition.)
For details of the subsequent editions of 1616 (3), 1618, 1622, 1626, 1627, 1628, 1630, 1632, 1638, 1655, 1664, 1756 see G. Murphy, *A Bibliography of English Character-Books* (Oxford: 1925).
1856. *The Miscellaneous Works In Prose and Verse Of Sir Thomas Overbury, Knt.*, edited by E. F. Rimbault. (Reprinted 1890.)

2. CRITICISM

(For the "Overbury" collection in general see Bibliography of *Camb. Hist. of Eng. Lit.* vol. IV.)

1909. C. E. Gough. *Sir T. Overbury*. Norwich.
1913. H. D. Sykes. "Webster and Sir Thomas Overbury" in *Notes and Queries*, II. VIII.
1914. Baron A. F. Bourgeois. "John Webster a Contributor to Sir Thomas Overbury's *Characters*" in *N.Q.* II. X.
1915. H. D. Sykes. "Was Webster a Contributor to Overbury's *Characters*?" in *N.Q.* II. XI.
1915. Baron A. F. Bourgeois. "John Webster and Overbury's *Characters*" in *N.Q.* II. XII.
1925. G. Murphy. *A Cabinet of Characters*. Oxford. (An excellent introduction.)

(*Wks.* ed. J. Hayward, p. 133). But Malone had no right to assume that the 1679 Quarto was this adaptation; and two minutes' comparison with that of 1654 would have revealed the truth. His mistake has perpetuated itself: and even Prof. Allardyce Nicoll's learned *Restoration Drama* (p. 353) says of the 1679 Quarto: "This *adaptation* of Webster is attributed to Betterton". (There is no copy in B.M.; but one in the Dyce Collection at S. Kensington.)

K. *Anything for a Quiet Life*

1. EDITIONS

1662. See title-page, IV. 73.
1840. In Dyce's *Middleton.*
1885–6. In Bullen's *Middleton.*

2. CRITICISM

1924. H. D. Sykes. *Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama.* "A Webster-Middleton Play: *Anything for a Quiet Life.*" (Reprinted from *Notes and Queries,* 12. IX.–X.)

L. *The Fair Maid of the Inn*

1. EDITIONS

1647. In First Folio of Beaumont and Fletcher.

For details of other editions of Beaumont and Fletcher see *Camb. Hist. of Eng. Lit.* VI. 435. These include: 1679, Second Folio; 1750, ed. with notes by Theobald, Seward, and Sympson; 1778, 1811, ed. Colman; 1812, ed. Weber; 1843–6, ed. Dyce; 1905, ed. Glover and Waller. (The *Variorum B. & F.* of 1904– has not reached *F.M.I.*)

2. CRITICISM

1886–7. R. Boyle in *Englische Studien* (Heilbronn), IX. 27; X. 391 ff.
1891. E. H. Oliphant in *Englische Studien,* XV. 342 ff.
1920. A. H. Cruickshank. *Massinger.* Oxford.
1924. H. D. Sykes. *Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama.* "A Webster-Massinger Play: *The Fair Maid of the Inn.*" (Reprinted from *Notes and Queries,* 11. XII.)

NOTE

For certain works frequently referred to, the following editions have been used:

A. Texts

Chapman. *Tragedies and Comedies.* Ed. T. M. Parrott. 1910–14.
Dodsley. *Old English Plays.* Ed. W. C. Hazlitt. 1874–6.
Heywood. *Dramatic Works.* Ed. Pearson. 1874.
Jonson. Ed. W. Gifford. 1816.
Lyly. *Euphues.* Ed. E. Arber. 1868. (For the plays.) *Works.* Ed. R. W. Bond. Oxford, 1902.
Marlowe. Ed. A. H. Bullen. 1885.
Marston. Ed. A. H. Bullen. 1887.

Middleton. Ed. A. H. Bullen. 1885–6.
Shakespeare. Ed. W. J. Craig. Oxford, 1904.
Sidney. *Arcadia*. Ed. A. Feuillerat. Cambridge, 1922.

B. Works of Reference frequently quoted, and contractions used for them

T. Birch. *Court and Times of James I, Court and Times of Charles I.* 1848.—Birch.
J. Brand. *Popular Antiquities.* (Chatto & Windus, 1913.)—Brand, *Pop. Antiq.*
E. K. Chambers. *The Elizabethan Stage.* Oxford, 1923.—Chambers.
F. G. Fleay. *A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama.* 1891.—Fleay.
L. Kellner. *Restoring Shakespeare.* 1925.—Kellner.
The New English Dictionary. Oxford, 1888–1928.—*N.E.D.*
Notes and Queries.—*N.Q.* (*N.Q.* 6. xi. 210 = 6th Series, vol. xi. p. 210.)
Shakespeare's England. Oxford, 1917.—*Sh.'s Eng.*
E. H. Sugden. *A Topographical Dictionary to the Works of Shakespeare and his Fellow Dramatists.* Manchester, 1925.—Sugden.

The following contractions are also used in referring to the separate works of Webster:

W.Ho!, N.Ho! = *Westward Ho!, Northward Ho!*
W.D. = *The White Devil.*
D.M. = *The Duchess of Malfi.*
D.L. = *The Devil's Law-Case.*
C.C. = *A Cure for a Cuckold.*
A.V. = *Appius and Virginia.*
Ind. Malc. = Induction to *The Malcontent.*
Mon. Col. = *A Monumental Column.*
Mon. Hon. = *Monuments of Honour.*
Char. = The thirty-two *New Characters* in the sixth impression of Overbury's *Characters* (1615).
A.Q.L. = *Anything for a Quiet Life.*
F.M.I. = *The Fair Maid of the Inn.*

For references to *Sir T. Wyat, Westward Ho!*, and *Northward Ho!* Hazlitt's *Webster* has been used, as handier and more easily obtainable.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

"These men had no sober vision of things. Theirs is a world that reels in a 'disastrous twilight' of lust and blood. We rise from Shakespeare enlarged and illumined. Webster is felt as a contracting and blurring influence.... Virtue in this disordered world is merely wasted, honour bears not issue, nobleness dies unto itself." SIR WILLIAM WATSON.

"The strength of Webster's confest mastership lies simply in his acquaintance with vicious nature in general. We will say no more on this matter, save to ask '*Cui bono?*' Was the art of which this was the highest manifestation likely to be of much use to mankind?" CHARLES KINGSLEY.

"The greatest contribution of Webster to characterisation is a stern, true moral sense." DR STOLL.

"Except in Aeschylus, in Dante, and in Shakespeare, I at least do not know where to seek for passages which in sheer force of tragic and noble horror... may be set against the subtlest, the deepest, the sublimest passages of Webster." A. C. SWINBURNE.

"Tussaud laureate." BERNARD SHAW.

"Ramshackle looseness of structure and barbarous violence of effect...hideous cacophonies, neither verse nor prose...Bedlam-broke-loose...poor Webster." WILLIAM ARCHER.

IT will be seen that a certain difference of opinion exists on the subject of Webster; as one reads his critics, the poet himself seems to sit, like his Duchess, bayed about with madmen. However since the question has seriously been raised whether Webster is to-day worth the attention of the common reader, it had best be dealt with at once. For certainly his right to live as a poet may claim to be more important than those trivial details of his life as an individual of which so little in any case is known. True, it is not in prefaces or by editors that the verdict will be given. The intelligent readers of each age form their own final court of appeal; and long before Kingsley or Archer was born, the answer to such attacks as theirs on Webster had been framed by Webster's fellow, Samuel Daniel, in words that deserve not to be forgotten—"Suffer the world to enjoy that which it knows and which it likes, seeing that whatsoever form of words both move, delight, and sway the affections of men, in what Scythian sort soever it be disposed and uttered, that is true number, eloquence, and perfection of speech". But this judgment of the world, that is, of the great body of intelligent readers,

can at least be made easier, as the distance and the difference increase between Webster's age and ours, by preparing the evidence and guarding beforehand against certain misconceptions. For Webster has not proved altogether a simple writer to understand and appreciate. In his own age he gained no special prominence; the eighteenth century almost ignored him; only since the Romantic Revival has he risen to rival Marlowe and Jonson for the place of honour next Shakespeare himself. To Lamb and Swinburne indeed he seemed at his best almost Shakespeare's equal: and yet by other minds, themselves not contemptible, he has been judged degraded as a man and futile as an artist. Now these Devil's advocates are not to be dismissed with a wave of the hand. Their indictment may not be very profound or important in itself; and there are drawbacks to thus beginning in the tone of an *Apology for Webster*. But an attempt to try to answer them fairly is after all more likely to reveal the dramatist's real qualities than a great deal of beating the air with vague gestures of panegyric. It is too easy to pile mere flowers of speech on a grave like Webster's; in a day or two it is the flowers that are dead. The essential is not to praise, but to try to understand.

Nor can the decriers of Webster be put aside—not even Mr Shaw—as mere eccentrics. Probably there will always be readers who shut these works with the moral distaste of Sir William Watson or the aesthetic contempt of William Archer. They would however at least be fewer, were it more widely understood from the start what the Elizabethan dramatists really set out to do. And if Webster is to be enjoyed, the surest way of avoiding disappointment is to know beforehand not only what to expect of him, but also what not to expect.

Webster's fame rests on his two great plays; the rest of his work is seldom more than meritorious, and sometimes less. In any case it is little read; and accordingly it is on these two plays that the attack has fallen. The indictment is double. The Victorians, as we should expect, denounced Webster as an immoral dramatist; William Archer and some other modern critics, as an incompetent one. This is, in our day, much the more serious charge; and it had better be dealt with first. William Archer's criticism of the Elizabethans is valuable not so much for the truth which underlies some of its exaggerations, as

because it provides such a clear object-lesson of the way not to approach the Elizabethans. To those who are cold to the pure poetry, not only of language, but of life and action; or to those who look first of all for the logic and stage-craft of an Ibsen, Webster, like his fellow Elizabethans, has little to say. Such readers will find here (let us own it at once), even in Webster's greatest work, things ill-connected and ill-constructed, things crude and gross and merely puerile. On the other hand, for most people of any literary taste it is enough to open *The White Devil* or *The Duchess of Malfi* to be fascinated. And yet, even so, if we are to read them through without a good deal of disturbance and repulsion and perplexity, it is also essential to make some effort of historical sympathy to enter into the spirit of that great and brutal age.

For the men who crowded The Phoenix or The Red Bull lived, both in the theatre and outside it, far more in the moment for the moment's sake than the cultured classes of to-day; and accordingly it was a succession of great moments that they wanted on the stage, not a well-made play. They did not at each instant look forward to what was coming or back to what had been. If a dramatist gave them great situations, ablaze with passion and poetry, it would have seemed to them a chilly sort of pedantry that peered too closely into the machinery by which these were produced. They did not want their fireworks analysed. They were, in fact, very like a modern cinema-audience, with the vast difference that they had also an appetite for poetry. And so all their playwrights, Shakespeare included, worked predominantly in scenes[1]. Scenes were the essential units. That is the first thing to realize about their plays. Hence the possibility of Elizabethan methods of wholesale collaboration; hence also the effectiveness of isolated fragments torn from their context like the *Dramatic Specimens* of Lamb. And yet the claims of consistency and probability? How could the hero say such a thing when he had said precisely the opposite two scenes before?

[1] This characteristic is interestingly expressed by an obscure French observer of the seventeenth century, quoted by A. B. Walkley—Samuel de Sorbière. In his *Relation d'un Voyage en Angleterre* (1664) he says of the English and their drama: "Il ne leur importe que ce soit un pot-pourri, parce qu'ils n'en regardent, *disent-ils*, qu'une partie après l'autre, sans se soucier du total". It is of interest to find our ancestors here becoming self-conscious of their national peculiarity.

"Did he?" an Elizabethan might have answered, "what a memory you have! But it is better than your wits, if you would have us lose the best scene in the play merely on that account." Critics have spent blameless lives in piously smoothing out discrepancies from the plots and characters of Shakespeare. And yet the dramatist himself, were he conscious of their labours, while gently gratified, might also with gentle irony point out that the critics had admirably solved the difficulties they had created; but that these difficulties had never occurred either to him or to his audience; and for them, accordingly, had not existed at all. Hamlet can speak of the bourne from which no traveller returns, with no sign of recollecting that he has just received a most intimate revelation concerning the next world from the lips of his own father's ghost; Lady Macbeth can talk of the babe she has suckled, though Macbeth, we are told elsewhere, is childless[1]—and we may leave it to erudition to debate whether it was that Lady Macbeth had been married before or that the child had died young. The oddest things happen to time in *Othello*, to space in *Lear*. And what does it matter? In reading the Elizabethans we must suspend our niggling disapproval of such things and live, as they did, in the moment; realizing that such difficulties are not to be solved, but to be ignored.

Yet this seems to be precisely what many people cannot do; and William Archer set himself to point out, with great ease and at great length, that the whole plot of *The Duchess of Malfi* is founded on a fallacy. For the Duke could not expect to gain "an infinite mass of treasure" by his sister's murder, seeing that she had already a son and heir by her first marriage. It is perfectly true. Yet this inconvenient child is only referred to once in the whole play in a quite unimportant passage of three lines, which could have been spared with the utmost ease. Indeed it is so immaterial that two eminent scholars (Jusserand and Kiesow) have missed it altogether and declared that Webster's Duchess was in fact childless by her first husband. She should have been. But the truth is simply that Webster did not think of such trifles; neither did his audience. And it is essential,

[1] Many critics, I know, apply "He has no children!" to Malcolm, not Macbeth. But this is surely less dramatic: it is equally obvious and indifferent to us that Malcolm, that smooth-faced nonentity, has none. Anyway it is clear that Macbeth is actually childless in the play.

therefore, to approach him and his fellow-Elizabethans with a little more unreflecting light-heartedness than a modern audience possesses. Had they been taxed with such inconsistencies, they might well have retorted in the words of one who shared something of their rebel spirit:

> Do I contradict myself?
> Very well then, I contradict myself.
> (I am large, I contain multitudes.)

And it is indeed the glory of their spacious stage that the living multitudes are there. A modern play is expected to go home with the clean and deadly click of a rifle-bolt. Their convention was other. It is the difference between a fairy-tale and a detective-story; and to judge them therefore we must begin by leaving our stop-watches and our cross-references behind.

For it is also, in justice, to be remembered how much more for the stage than for the study these plays were written. Printing was a *pis aller*. "A great part of the grace of this I confesse," says Webster in the Preface to *The Devil's Law-Case*, "lay in Action" —so much so that from the text of that play it remains obscure to this day who in the end marries whom. Further, the acting went faster than ours, with no delays to change the scene and break the enchantment, no time to stop and think. And so to expect from such works rigid logic and causation is like completing a bas-relief in the round and then criticizing its grouping, or complaining of the bad perspective of an Italian Primitive. It would indeed seem platitudinous to repeat all this, if it were not in fact perpetually being forgotten. Doubtless "the Master of those who know" has said in the *Poetics* that everything in a play should be logically caused by the thing before it. All glory to *Oedipus* and *Athalie* and *Hedda Gabler*. But as it happens, Aristotle was little thumbed on the Bankside; and those who lament this, might with poetic justice be condemned to read *Catiline* once a week for life. Webster's own *Appius and Virginia* takes fewer liberties than most modern plays; but that does not save it from being meritoriously undistinguished in comparison with his greatest work. Elizabethan plays would doubtless be far better, had a little more logic and good sense gone to their making; but one cannot have everything. Webster himself indeed was in theory on the side of William Archer, and against his own practice; so that the modern critic might well have

shown the dramatist a little more indulgence in consideration of that Preface to *The White Devil* where Webster complains so bitterly that it was waste of labour to write well-made and classical plays for "the uncapable multitude". At all events, fortunately for us, he sacrificed Aristotle to his groundlings. The playwright had to live; and it is ironic to reflect that but for that happy accident his work would probably have died with him.

The first thing, then, in appreciating an Elizabethan like Webster is to be as cavalier about his plots as he was himself. After all it is not so difficult. *The White Devil*, well acted, can carry an audience breathless with it over all the breaks and rough places in its plot, with the irresistible onrush of a great roller surging up a rocky beach. For the reader of course it is harder; he has not before him the superb rapidity of the Elizabethan stage with its scene hurled upon scene, swift as hammer-strokes on a great anvil. His imagination has to work and build far more before it can enjoy. And we have lost, too, the simplicity of our forefathers which looked untroubled on soliloquy and aside, while the miser "leans against a wall and grows generous", or the character who is no longer wanted, "Exit pursued by a bear" amid loud and prolonged applause. But to William Archer, jealous for his contemporary dramatists struggling with their pernicketty audiences, it seemed monstrously unfair that the Elizabethans should be allowed to commit all these enormities and yet be praised for it. So it is. But why was the privilege given them? Because they justified it by their results—above all, by their poetry. So Marsyas too complained of injustice when, in the contest of his flute against Apollo's lyre, Apollo sang—how could a mortal artist compete with the god's great voice as well? And it is true that his flute was a more cunning, more complicated instrument than the harp; "there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ". Yet Marsyas was flayed in the end for all that; and of the unfortunate critic who persisted in preferring him, all the Phrygian winds were soon a-whisper—"King Midas has the ears of an ass".

To William Archer, then, Webster is a morbid being, something of a poet, but dramatically quite incompetent. Let us first consider how far this charge of incompetence is really

justified by Webster's plots. For it is, I think, quite possible to underrate even his stage-craft until we learn to look at his tragedies as his audience saw them—less as wholes than as a series of great situations. Webster cannot give his plays a close-knit logical unity; he is often childishly irrelevant; and his characters are sometimes wildly inconsistent from scene to scene. That was the fashion of his day. But his work remains more than a mere chaos of dramatic fragments, and he is a highly successful playwright in his own Gothic style. The Arraignment of Vittoria, its baser, not less clever, counterpart, the trial of Leonora in *The Devil's Law-Case*, the duels of Ercole and Contarino, of Bonvile and Lessingham, are the work of a dramatist. Webster has not, indeed, Massinger's occasionally almost modern cleverness in complicating an intrigue; he is too apt to cut his knots in the end with some over-rusty and outworn hack-saw; and repeatedly his fifth act loses hold. For he wrote slowly; and it seems, in play after play, as if his brain had grown stale before his work was done. But, if he wrote slowly, one of his most striking excellences as a playwright is the swiftness of his action. If his mind tires in the long run, at the great crises "lightning moves slow to it". Like some great ragged thunder-cloud he piles up slowly to overshadow his world with the sinister yellow darkness that he loves; the atmosphere grows stifling; and then comes the sudden glare before which the situation lies revealed in all its vivid nakedness, with an intensity of black and white that calm daylight could never have given.

Brooding atmosphere and sudden flashes—he is the master of these. "Banished!"—no work in English begins more vividly than *The White Devil* with this angry cry of the bitter Lodovico, the destined deathsman of the play, who is to close the tragedy as he opens it, when at last, his vengeance accomplished and his hot blood cooled, he goes to rack and torment as a weary man to his bed[1]. This headlong opening is followed by a scene of swift gibe and counter-gibe between Lodovico and his half-mocking comforters; it ends; the stage is hidden in torch-lit darkness, and then comes the second lightning-flash—"Quite

[1] Rupert Brooke's comment is less favourable. "The play begins with a bang. From the point of view of the plot it is an unusual and unhelpful beginning." This is hardly a point that can be argued: but I think he failed to see the dramatic significance of Lodovico as the destined Avenger; and he had not, it may be added, seen the play on the stage.

lost, Flamineo!" The fatal passion of Brachiano has found its utterance: the tragedy has begun and its hero stands before us, doomed in his first words. Then follows a second, longer interval in which the action progresses as it might in any other Elizabethan dramatist. Flamineo panders, Vittoria yields, Brachiano pours out the lavish promises of love's triumph—

> You shall to me at once,
> Be Dukedome, health, wife, children, friends and all.

And then once more the sudden glare in the darkness—the grey old woman standing between the lovers, while in her mouth the couplet swoops onward to the chiming cadence of its fatal close—

> Woe to light hearts!—they still forerun our fall.

Is this stage-craft really so bungling? Such instantaneousness is very characteristic of the early Webster. Donne and Donne alone among his contemporaries has the same wild-cat way of springing straight at the throat. We shall find it in the plays again and again—in the scene where Brachiano is raving to his death—

> Ile doe a miracle: Ile free the Court
> From all foule vermin. *Where's Flamineo?*—

in the swift, sad simplicity of Francisco's reproach to Marcello's murderer—

> Your reverend mother
> Is growne a very old woman in two howers—

in *The Duchess of Malfi*, where the heroine turns laughing to look in her lover's eyes and finds instead her brother standing with a poniard in his hand, and stiffens herself in that instant of horror to meet death "like a Prince"; and lastly in the most famous instance of all, when she lies dead and her murderer gazing down upon her breaks into the supreme

> Cover her face: Mine eyes dazell: she di'd yong[1].

"Qu'il mourût!"—"Qui te l'a dit?"—the same deadly abruptness, the same "coup de fouet" as Raynouard called it, startles us in the cry of Corneille's Roman father or Racine's Hermione; and yet how clearly, on the other hand, in this very parallel

[1] It is curious to note how typically the good Theobald in his adaptation of the play polishes the abruptness of this line into the banal—"Cover her face; my eyes begin to dazzle".

there stands once more revealed the eternal difference between the nobly bare directness of the Classic stage and the mysterious suggestiveness of the Romantic with its cunning incoherences!

There is something modern, something akin to the drama of "curtains" and pistol-shots, in this gift of laconic unexpectedness. But Webster's love of sudden strokes never falls into the vulgarity of mere stage effects; for with the suddenness there goes always the saving poetry, the passionate intensity in what is said. Even in Webster's later work, when his vein of poetry has almost ceased, these "bitter flashes" still sometimes recur with a touch of the old forgotten fire. When Leonora's shameless suit to disinherit her son by accusing herself of adultery breaks down in court, the sudden wry exclamation of the attorney Sanitonella—

> Uds foot, we are spoyled—
> Why my Clyent's prooved an honest woman!—

provides a more brilliant summing up than ten judges could have given. And again, when Bosola cries impatiently, as if the question were almost too obvious, to Julia poisoned by her lover—

> Oh *foolish* woman,
> Couldst not thou have poyson'd him?—

in the scornful light of that one epithet there stands outlined for an instant not merely the soul of Bosola himself, but all the ruthlessness of Renaissance Italy. The implied strikes always so much deeper than the said. For it seems to the hearer, who has to wrestle for its full significance, as if the thought were half his own. Indeed it becomes so. And it is partly for the same reason that the swift is so much more effective than the slow, not merely because of its effect of surprise. The hearer has to exert himself to keep pace with the speaker. He ceases to be merely passive; he collaborates; and the emotion is the keener because it has not been taken lying down.

Flashes of lightning amid gathering thunder-cloud—if the flashes have been illustrated from *The White Devil*, for the gathering cloud we may turn to the sister-tragedy and to that scene where, with an Elizabethan variation on the old ballad theme of the Princess and the Squire of low degree, the Duchess of Malfi woos and wins her steward. It is a difficult situation for the mistress to court the lover; indeed Charles Kingsley found it all "painful" and the Duchess "merely forward".

Others less sensitive have been amazed at its perfect delicacy of touch, and the Duchess has won more hearts than Antonio's. But, beyond this, it is worth watching the skill with which the shadow of calamity to come is thrown by the dramatist even across the radiance of his lovers' happiness. It is Love's triumph; but Death too is there. The scene begins, while the threats of the Duchess's brothers are still echoing in our ears, with the making of a will; with talk of treasure laid up in Heaven, not on earth; of winding-sheets; of the vanity of bringing children into the world. It is all playful, yet a shadow broods over it; and as the lovers' hearts beat faster and faster towards avowal, jest and earnest chase one another like April sun and cloud across their hasty sentences. Antonio likens the ambition that tempts him to madness shut in a palace—

> Ambition (Madam) is a great mans madnes,
> That is not kept in chaines, and close-pent-roomes,
> But in faire lightsome lodgings, and is girt
> With the wild noyce of pratling visitants,
> Which makes it lunatique, beyond all cure.

We cannot be certain that Webster meant it so, but surely the reader's mind leaps forward here to the final scene of the Duchess's torment amid the screams of real madmen. Or shall we say that the spectator's thoughts are here being unconsciously attuned to what lurks in store? That may be fanciful; but at least the shape of Death presses closer than ever upon us, as the Duchess cries to her dazed lover to see that she is living flesh and blood:

> Sir, be confident,
> What is't distracts you? This is flesh, and blood, (Sir,)
> 'Tis not the figure cut in Allablaster
> Kneeles at my husbands tombe.

We had forgotten that husband; as the Duchess too had till that moment forgotten him and the white statue of herself bowed for ever above the dead Duke's ashes in some dim vault of the Cathedral of Amalfi. And with this sudden recollection it is as if the dead past stirred unquietly in its slumber and a breath rose from the waiting tomb. Was ever wooing sinister as this? Will, winding-sheet, tomb, *Quietus est*. No matter; for now at least "a sacred Gordian", never to be untied, has made the lovers one. And then we suddenly remember that the doom of

the Gordian knot was no other than to be severed by a sword[1]. And as if the sword of Alexander the Great had awakened an echo in the Duchess's own mind, with a sudden revulsion of maiden shame she fancies a naked sword, as in the old tale about another Alexander and his friend Lodowick, laid between her and her lover in the bridal-bed. Then, last of all, like a closing knell fall the ominous words of Cariola—

> Whether the spirit of greatnes, or of woman
> Raigne most in her, I know not, but it shewes
> A fearefull madnes. I owe her much of pitty.

Let it be granted that such hints, torn from their context and collected thus, may wear an overloaded look; that the commentator's fancy may have played some part. In spite of that few, I think, will read this scene without feeling that in the creation of an atmosphere of foreboding Webster had little to learn; and that here, most unexpectedly, he joins hands with William Archer's idol, the master whose sinister vision gave body to the Wild Duck in its attic, to the White Horses in the mill-race of Rosmersholm. While granting, then, that the stage-craft of the Elizabethans was a simpler, more easy-going thing than ours, let us be fair to it at least.

Sudden flashes and sullen atmosphere—the two gifts are not unconnected. In either case it is a question of the single deft touch which goes home, the spare brevity which makes the hearer think more, the less he hears—in a word, economy. This is a quality in Webster to which justice has not been done. While his too obvious horrors have been overpraised, his subtlety, his power of suggestion have been forgotten.

So much, then, for Webster's handling of his plots. He did not, except in single scenes, approach the technical perfection of Greek or French or the best modern drama; but then no Elizabethan does. How many Elizabethan plays are good, as plays? Yet, judged within the limits and by the standards of his age, he has a gift for situation that is often consummate: and as with his plots so with his characters. Here too, Webster is a dramatist as well as a poet: here too he can pack a sentence with suggestiveness. It is easy to think of the chief characters of *The White Devil* as merely a trio of conventional Renaissance

[1] For this definite association of "gordians" with violence, cf. too *The Devil's Law-Case*, II. 4. 50.

villains; and yet how clearly the deeper dye of Flamineo's cynicism reveals itself in a single exclamation of his impatient worldly-wisdom, when the lovers' quarrel of Vittoria and Brachiano begins to goad them into rash and angry renunciations of each other for ever—

> O, no othes for gods sake!

The Duke and his adulteress are themselves no children; the life of courts has long since stained and hardened both; and yet in these half-dozen words we suddenly realize the gulf that lies between their hot passions and the older, colder, wearier disillusion of Flamineo, which has seen and remembers the making and breaking of too many vows that once seemed inviolable. It is easy, again, to think of Duke Ferdinand as a mere stage-ogre—one whose character consists chiefly in falling into rages, who might have walked straight into a Jonsonian Comedy of Humours, and taken his place there as the Choleric Man. There is some truth in this: and yet there is something subtler also in the irony with which Webster chooses the precise form of madness that shall overtake that ardent and impatient soul—

> I am studying the Art of Patience...to drive six Snailes before me, from this towne to *Mosco*; neither use Goad, nor Whip to them, but let them take their owne time: (the patientst man i'th' world match me for an experiment!)

And it is typical, to the end, of the fantastic Spanish punctilio of family-honour to which this hidalgo has sacrificed his sister in cold blood, that in his last frenzy he should stab his brother also with this moon-struck cry of "Honour" still upon his lips; while on the other hand the stealthy, furtive Cardinal, no less true to himself, cries with his last breath only to be huddled into the ground and forgotten.

Another great quality of Webster's characters at their best is that they retain some of the unexpectedness of life. They have the power, which real people possess and puppets lack, of growing familiar to us and yet at certain moments saying or doing what we did not look for from them. Carried too far, such characterization leads to mere inconsistency; used within bounds, it adds a due touch of the mystery of living humanity. For it is not a real person, that can be read like a book; not a living heart, that can be laid utterly bare. But when the un-

scrupulous and selfish Brachiano in his death-agony shows unexpected care for Vittoria; or when the doomed Flamineo cries in admiration of her courage to the sister he has a moment since tried to murder—

> Th' art a noble sister,
> I love thee now,—

we recognize in our surprise something even better than consistency—truth.

Of Webster's characters in general, then, we may say that they are painted with a broad brush that does not exclude, now and then, a sudden delicacy of touch. They fill an adequate place on his canvas, though they seldom step out of the frame into the world, to continue existing with all the reality of living people we have known, as does a Falstaff or a Hamlet. To such vitality as that, Vittoria and her brother come nearest. Vittoria, indeed, is as haunting as any of Shakespeare's women—more magnificent than Lady Macbeth, nobler than Cleopatra; and Flamineo possesses more humour, a quicker wit, a deeper cynicism even than Iago, though there are sometimes faults and blotches in Webster's execution which Shakespeare at his best would have avoided. But these remain exceptional. And though there is a vivid truthfulness in the drawing of the noble, yet too nerveless, Antonio, or of the high-spirited gaiety of the Duchess, before she becomes too much the passive martyr; though there is real life in the gay worthlessness of creatures like Winifrid and Sanitonella; still to Webster's characters in general we may apply the words of Tacitus on a successful public servant under the Roman Empire—"par negotiis neque supra erat"—they too are adequate to the part they play, and no more than that. On the other hand, the protest of Thorndike that the character of a Bosola or a Flamineo "manifestly violates all psychology" is ridiculous. It would be a poor world that did not contain things undreamed of in the psychology of professors. Human beings are not to be thrust neatly and summarily into one or other of some thirty pigeon-holes like the Characters of Theophrastus, with a summary dismissal as inhuman of any character that resists such superficial treatment. And even academic gentlemen might extend their knowledge of life by at least reading a little history. It is simple to exclaim that Flamineo could never have felt admiration, or Bosola pity. And yet why not? Marat kept doves.

However let us grant that it is not so much for his characters that Webster is remembered, as for the light and darkness he was able to cast across them as they moved, his power to make them the mouthpieces of the poetry both of great instants and of eternity, the embodiments of a dying dream. For it was his fate and his good fortune to give supreme utterance to that disillusion which seems to brood over the years that saw the House of Tudor give place to the House of Stuart and the great tragedies of English literature come to birth. It was a passing mood, soon to be forgotten in the frivolities of smaller men like Fletcher, too little for a great despair; but it is above all because he has expressed so perfectly in poetry that mood of his time, that Webster has outlived it.

For if we ask where lies the peculiar and abiding spell of this dramatist whose technique is unequal and psychology uncertain, however brilliant at moments both of them may be, the answer is in his poetry—in his gift not only for the pure poetry of word and image, but for the poetry also of personality and atmosphere; and lastly for the poetry of a most embittered and tragic view of life. More and more it is becoming clear that the Elizabethan dramatists, including even Shakespeare, are, above all else, poets. It is an exaggeration, of course, to say with Mr Shaw, that Shakespeare has no ideas worth twopence, and that his supreme gift of language is his only one; or to be charmed by Mr Aldous Huxley's wit into accepting unqualified the statement that Shakespeare has produced only three real characters and that some abracadabra of verbal eloquence is the magician's one real spell[1]. But it is a great deal wiser and honester than the old idolatry which adored in Shakespeare the greatest psychologist and philosopher, moralist and law-giver that the world had ever seen.

Thus Prospero is, to many of us, a complacent and unpleasant old man; we tolerate him for the sake of what he has to tell us about the stuff of dreams. To us the desperate sadness of the doomed Macbeth is older than Solomon; but we listen again to that cry of world-disgusted bitterness,

To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow...

[1] I should add that this statement is put into the mouth of a character in a novel and therefore cannot, of course, be assumed to be the writer's own opinion.

as if it had first been uttered yesterday. In the great Elizabethans it is largely the vividness of their language that gives life to their characters; the life of their characters that in its turn lends life to their plots. Were not Shylock so terribly real, we should laugh at the pound of flesh; and we should think Shylock himself half-unreal, were not our disbelief spellbound by the passion of his eloquence. So the song of Orpheus breathed life even into stock and stone.

So too with Webster. We have discussed his plots and his characters; but here in his poetry and his atmosphere the larger half of him remains. It follows that to criticize him without a taste for poetry is to be like a deaf man judging Wagner; and Archer's attack was little wiser. Later, indeed, this stream of poetry dried up, after running so deep and strong in the two first tragedies; and with it the greatness goes out of Webster's work. But while it lasts, the gift shows itself in many forms, from the verbal magic of pure poetry to the deeper appeal of utterances that have a personal accent, the ring of no common soul; or, to use a contested distinction, from poetry that is good to poetry that is also great. Its simplest elements yield nothing to analysis: we can say little more than that they are perfect, of such phrases as "the malice of those that have been happy"—"the friendless bodies of unburied men"—"I am in the way to study a long silence"—"her infelicity Seemed to have years too many". Amid the harsh cries and the mocking laughter these things break upon us like a beautiful voice suddenly heard in the ward of a fever-hospital. And together with this gift of phrase and of joining together words that nothing shall put asunder, goes also a power of passionate imagining, an energy which seems to make his words quiver as in the air above a furnace.

> I would have their bodies
> Burn't in a coale-pit, with the ventage stop'd,
> That their curs'd smoake might not ascend to Heaven:
> Or dippe the sheetes they lie in, in pitch or sulphure,
> Wrap them in't, and then light them like a match.
>
> O thou foole,
> Whose greatnesse hath by much oregrowne thy wit!
> What dar'st thou doe, that I not dare to suffer,
> Excepting to bee still thy whore? for that...
> In the seas bottome sooner thou shalt make
> A bonefire.

You would dig turves out of my grave to feed your Larkes: that would bee musicke to you.

> Nay, I have done,
> I am confident, had I bin damn'd in hell,
> And should have heard of this, it would have put me
> Into a cold sweat.

In this imagery of Webster two qualities force their way to the front—bitterness and love of the macabre. The two do not go together by mere accident. The mind which has come by bitter experience to loath the "painted comforts" that hide the cruelty of the world is the readier in its reaction to dwell almost lovingly on the grim realities behind. They at least are true, and better than pretence. So it was with Swift. With the same cold passion Webster again and again tears the mask from life; and from the horror of death and decay behind, at times he cannot take his eyes. He comes to revel in seeing and saying the worst, to chew long the bitterest truths, seasoned with the relish of a bitterer wit. If all effort is vanity and all labour lost, at least that terrible intensity with which his utterance trembles, can find its outlet in a passion of supreme contempt.

> Marke her I prethee, shee simpers like the suddes
> A Collier hath bene washt in.

He lookes like the claw of a blacke-bird, first salted and then broyled in a candle.

O thou cursed antipathy to nature—looke, his eye's bloud-shed like a needle a Chirurgeon stitcheth a wound with—let me embrace thee toad!

> Why fare thee well:
> Your brother, and your selfe, are worthy men;
> You have a paire of hearts, are hollow Graves,
> Rotten and rotting others.
>
> Like mistle-tow on seare Elmes spent by weather,
> Let him cleave to her and both rot together.

At such moments, to use Webster's own image, "there's hemlock in his breath". We might expect Flamineo, like any other devil, to sneer at passionate love, with its under-age protestations, its caught birds that long to be free, its free birds that cry for the cage. Yet it is not Flamineo, but the loving Antonio

himself, in the very moment of love's fulfilment, in whose mouth is set a mockery of the vanity of parenthood:

> Say a man never marry, nor have children,
> What takes that from him? onely the bare name
> Of being a father, or the weake delight
> To see the little wanton ride a cocke-horse
> Upon a painted sticke, or heare him chatter
> Like a taught Starling.

It is no broken sufferer, but the prosperous widow Leonora, who suddenly exclaims to her waiting-woman at the long littleness all her life has been—

> Thou hast lived with me
> These fortie yeares; we have growne old together,
> As many Ladies and their women doe,
> With talking nothing, and with doing lesse:
> We have spent our life in that which least concernes life,
> Only in putting on our clothes; and now I thinke on't,
> I have been a very courtly Mistris to thee,
> I have given thee good words, but no deeds.

Mistress and servant, father and child, lover and lover—all human ties reveal themselves in the end as vanity. For life itself is but a tedious malady—

> Pleasure of life, what is't? onely the good houres
> Of an Ague.

And even in death, we are once more for the last time betrayed—

> O Men
> That lye upon your death-beds, and are haunted
> With howling wives, neere trust them, they'le remarry
> Ere the worme peirce your winding sheete: ere the Spider
> Make a thinne curtaine for your Epitaphes.

Now it is perfectly true that these are only the utterances of Webster's characters; but again and again we seem to catch the intonation of his own voice in these passages which are so characteristic of his work, these themes which are brought in and harped upon at every turn, these denunciations of the world which are written, not only *con amore*, but surely also *con odio*. There is an embittered sincerity about Webster in such moments of satire, which takes us back to the rage of Juvenal on the theme of women, or the cold irony of the court-paintings of Tacitus. Webster too, indeed, in Fénelon's fine phrase of the Roman

historian, "creuse dans le mal". The regular satirists of Webster's age, like Marston, who make up for the lack of other gifts by their savagery, are not unakin to him in this; and Webster himself, as we shall see, probably contributed to "Overbury's" *Characters* pieces which are often pure prose satire, and to be read side by side with that verse Character of a harlot which the Cardinal thunders at Vittoria in the court at Rome. This acrid mood is never far from the great Webster. Full of splendour and beauty as his finest work is,

> medio de fonte leporum
> Surgit amari aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angat.

"Nay, I will be bitter," cry his characters. "Are you drunk?" —"Yes, yes, with worm-wood water."

There are moments, indeed, when we weary of this river of vitriol that flows fuming through his tragedies and feel that the author grows too like his own Bosola, whose "rayling is not for love of piety"; and that, as Antonio says,

> This foule mellancholly
> Will poyson all his goodnesse.

We seem to detect (as, again, in Juvenal) an under-tone of personal grievance and disappointment with the world, as we read his growling prefaces or watch his characters rend one another and the whole human race. For nothing escapes this fiery rain of scorn—on princes and beggars, noble lords and mushroom upstarts, churchmen and Puritans, scholars and doctors, lawyers and women, just and unjust it descends. "Nobody is morally nobler than Webster," wrote Swinburne. But Swinburne had too ready a sympathy with flagellation; and we may well believe that Webster, like most scourgers of mankind, wrote thus bitterly not so much because his ideals were deeply wounded, as because he found he had a pretty hand with the lash. Whatever the cause, however, we should after all be thankful; for in Webster this indignation created some of his finest poetry. He needed some violent impulse like anger; and, as Longinus so truly and finely says of Euripides, before Webster can spring to his full height, he must lash himself, lion-like, with his own tail. He is one of those writers—there are not a few—in whom not sweetness, but bitterness, has gone with strength. A greater poet indeed would have risen more often above this

rage and rancour; yet let us remember also that the greatest of poets wrote *Troilus and Cressida*. Nor need we ask too closely how righteous was Webster's anger against the world; being sufficiently thankful for its strong and bitter fruit.

In a word, Webster's bitterness and his fondness for the macabre are both products of the same mood of disillusion. Of his bitterness enough has now been said; of the macabre in him so much too much has already been said by others, that I could gladly have passed it by. For this is the one side of Webster that the world has come to know too well. Lamb set on foot the tradition of the "Tussaud laureate", with that somewhat unfortunate criticism of his on the fourth act of *The Duchess of Malfi*[1], which has been dutifully quoted by every writer on Webster ever since, and which fell such an easy prey to the scornful common-sense of William Archer. Swinburne gave a further impulse to this idea of a poet in whose work "Earth cries out from all her graves". And it has done deep injustice to Webster's name that he has thus come to be thought of as an Elizabethan Edgar Allan Poe, the forbear of Mrs Radcliffe and "Monk" Lewis, a Bluebeard among dramatists and a poet who wreathed his roses only about a skull. The devout have shrieked admiringly in chorus how he made their flesh creep. And hostile critics have coldly replied, that in that case it was mere goose-flesh, and they for their part were not in the least appalled by this rush-light in a hollow turnip. But Webster does not survive as a glorified Fat Boy in *Pickwick*. Why indeed should he in particular be accused of "crude physical horrors"? The final slaughter in *The White Devil* has dozens of counterparts elsewhere, including *Hamlet* itself: and throughout all his work there is nothing one half as horrible as the putting-out of Gloucester's eyes in *Lear*. It is merely that Shakespeare can do no wrong. The most exaggerated fuss of all has been made about the dead man's hand in *The Duchess of Malfi*. Too many

[1] "What are 'Luke's iron crown', the brazen bull of Perillus, Procrustes' bed, to the waxen images which counterfeit death, to the wild masque of madmen, the tomb-maker, the bellman, the living person's dirge, the mortification by degrees!" I confess that I wish Lamb had spared us this catalogue of "dreadful apparatus"; if he meant that the spectator is more horror-struck, in any sense whatever, by the Duchess's sufferings than he would be by the sight of a man being roasted alive, the statement is simply not true; and it would do Webster small credit if it were.

of the present generation have stumbled about in the darkness among month-old corpses on the battle-fields of France to be much impressed by the falsetto uproar which this piece of "business" occasioned in nineteenth-century minds. And as for dances of madmen, to the ordinary Elizabethan such things were a familiar piece of entertainment for a comedy or a wedding[1]. The modern reader may smile or yawn, but certainly these poor lunatics were never intended to make anyone's hair stand on end; they are really a half-comic interlude to give relief from the tension of the tragic climax, and far less tragic in themselves than the ravings of the dying Brachiano. Our civilization tries to forget death and madness: they are discreetly screened away from our daily lives. But if their representation consequently causes horror to some modern minds, it is hardly fair to throw all the blame on the Elizabethans: still less, to pretend that Webster was deliberately trying to work upon his hearers' nerves, beyond the just bounds of tragedy. An Elizabethan would not have understood what such criticism meant: and would probably have felt far more terror of Hamlet's ghost or Banquo's, which we regard as quite legitimate stage-effects, than of a dozen madmen or a hundred dead men's hands[2]. Of

[1] Cf. the comic Bedlam-scenes in Dekker's *Honest Whore* and in *Northward Ho!*: the latter indeed makes it clear that honest Elizabethans turned into a mad-house for half-an-hour's diversion as naturally as their descendants into a picture-palace. Nor was this taste peculiar to the lower classes: thus there was a Masque of Madmen at the wedding of the Princess Elizabeth. Similarly in France: *la grande Mademoiselle* goes to visit her aunt the abbess of Fontevrault; she is bored; in a happy moment her maids-in-waiting discover a mad nun in a cell. "Je pris ma course vers ce cachot," says she, "et n'en sortis que pour souper." The next day the abbess, seeing her taste, "la régala d'une seconde folle": after that, the supply being exhausted, *la grande Mademoiselle* records that her boredom returned and she departed. (Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, III. 505.)

[2] Owing to sentimental visions of the England of "good Queen Bess" as a land peopled with Sidneys and Rosalinds, it is seldom realized by what savages it was largely inhabited. "On the twentieth of the same month," says Camden, describing the end of Babington's Conspiracy, "the first seven were hanged, cut down, their Privities cut off, their Bowels taken out before their faces while they were alive, and their Bodies quartered; *not without some note and touch of cruelty*." Cf. Marston, *Fawn*, IV. 1, which alludes to the eagerness with which some women, even expectant mothers, paid to see such sights. If executions were scarce, a book like Nash's *Unfortunate Traveller* provided some slight equivalent. And these are the people on whose nerves Webster is supposed to have been trying to play unduly with a dead hand!

course it goes without saying that in Webster, as in Beddoes or in Poe, the gloomy fascination of the grave remains insistent. There is a great deal of this "talk fit for a charnel". But there is no excuse for treating that as Webster's dominant characteristic, for regarding him merely as an old witch torturing wax puppets before a slow fire, or being deafened to his poetry by the supposed rattling of skeletons in his cupboards. It was, we must remember, a far commoner thing then to dwell on worms and graveyards; they were a staple of the established religion and a commonplace of the pulpit of the day, as a perusal of sermons like Donne's will amply serve to show. Webster's obsession with the subject was more than usually strong, but it was nothing abnormal. And we only associate his name pre-eminently with all this "wormy circumstance", because we cannot forget its sombre power upon his lips, as we forget the cruder horrors created by Marston or Tourneur. There can be a terrible intensity in morbid art; and like Donne, Webster wielded it. But of course it is not the highest form of literary appeal; nor is it the greatest thing in him; and this idea has only led to misunderstanding. It becomes so easy, having once mistaken the central features of a writer, to distort everything else in him to fit; so easy to multiply quotations from Webster's work about worms in winding-sheets and yews in graves. The real point is not that Webster wrote about such subjects, but that he wrote poetry about them. What we cherish is the magnificent vividness of Vittoria's vision of Judgment—

> I prethee yet remember,
> Millions are now in graves, which at last day
> Like Mandrakes shall rise shreeking—

or of Brachiano's longing for the quiet sleep with which death falls at last on the eyelids of the poor—

> O thou soft naturall death, that art joint-twin
> To sweetest slumber: no rough-bearded Comet,
> Stares on thy milde departure: the dull Owle
> Beates not against thy casement: the hoarse wolfe
> Sents not thy carion. Pitty windes thy coarse,
> Whilst horrour waights on Princes.

And if we wonder what it was that set on Webster's work this stamp of mingled beauty and terror and turned his eyes

towards this darkness, we must go into the larger question of the attitude to life that pervades the two great plays. It is worth seeing the dramatist not only on his stage, but also against the background of his world. What in general Webster believed, we cannot know; we can only say that in these years he showed a power of entering above all into the souls of those for whom life is a fever tormented with hopeless dreams of happiness, whose lucid moments are both haunted and fascinated and repelled by the thought of the quiet and final rest of death—if rest it be, and not endless torment. He understood far fewer types of men than Shakespeare; his was a narrower soul; but such a view of life as this, whether he ever adopted it himself or not, he had felt and imagined with an overpowering intensity. And here again Webster does not stand apart from others of his age; merely higher than most of them. The same anger with life runs through the satires of Marston and the youthful poetry of Donne, through plays like *The Malcontent* and *Troilus* and *Lear*. After the glory had come the reaction, the disappointment of an age our own can well understand. For in Webster we may see embodied the soul of the ageing Renaissance—that rebirth sinking deathward in its turn, while about its pillow gibber the grotesque shadows, the charnel-laughter of the Middle Ages it had overthrown. In Donne, in Webster, in Burton, in Browne, in Hamlet appears this figure of the subtle humanity of the later Renaissance gazing in fascination on the skull of that more childish world which had jested and suffered and gone down to death before it.

The Renaissance had triumphed so gloriously, in its first magnificent riot of individuality. It had bred men free from the repressions, the cringings, the conformities of the centuries of superstition; men whose will was their only law and whose intellect their only guide, who to their undying glory or their lasting shame found and remained themselves. It was in their proud image that Milton fashioned the Prince of Hell himself. They had thrust back the barriers of ages; Nature gave up to them her secrets; and what should resist them? A New World rose up where there had seemed but an emptiness: but a new and more awful emptiness of infinite space yawned now where once had seemed to rest the fixed foundations of the world. "Infinite"—"infinitely"—the words echo again and again through Webster's scenes.

Had I *infinite* worlds
They were too little for thee.

An *infinite* masse of Treasure by her death.

But also—

On paine of death, let no man name death to me,
It is a word *infinitely* terrible.

What dost thinke on?—
Nothing; of nothing: leave thy idle questions,
I am ith way to study a long silence,
To prate were idle, I remember nothing.
Thers nothing of so *infinit* vexation
As mans owne thoughts.

This indeed was the end. For the Renaissance had also failed:

I stand like one
That long hath ta'ne a sweet, and golden dreame.
I am angry with my selfe, now that I wake.

This new-seen world had seemed an eternal feast of beauty: and now the worm was there. Amid all the new conquests of the unchained intellect Death remained still unconquered. Tamburlaine might cry to set his black banners in the heavens in token of the overthrow of God; but seven feet of earth joined the Scythian conqueror and the pale thinker of Wittenberg in the end. Such seemed to Jeremy Taylor the conclusion of it all.

The same is the portion of every man and every woman; the heritage of worms and serpents, rottenness and cold dishonour...Nature hath given us one harvest every year, but death hath two; and the spring and the autumn send throngs of men and women to charnelhouses; and, all the summer long, men are recovering from the evils of the spring, till the dogdays come, and then the Sirian star makes the summer deadly; and the fruits of autumn are laid up for all the year's provision, and the man that gathers them eats and surfeits, and dies and needs them not, and himself is laid up for eternity.

Indeed the harvest of death as well as of life grew richer, as men turned their new audacity to murder, their new liberty to licence, their new intellect to fraud and cruelty. In the seat of Lorenzo the Magnificent sat the petty poisoners and tyrants of Medicean degeneracy; and the Machiavelli who had died crying—"Amo la patria mia più dell' anima", became in men's memory only the devilish archetype of Iago and Barabas. And so that morning confidence faded and passed to the place of other

morning dreams. They had reached the prisoning bars that circumscribe the freest, the fundamental limitations set on human life, to-day as then. Men felt once more the returning shadows of death and eternity; the religious reactions won their way; and the last heirs of the Renaissance were left staring into the devouring darkness of the grave. They saw that they had built on ancient ruins; they foresaw now in its sure turn the ruin of all that they could build. They had lived hard; had sought to take their heavens by storm; they had failed, and their striving had been folly, and they longed now only to rest.

> Farewell glorious villaines,
> This busie trade of life appeares most vaine,
> Since rest breeds rest, where all seeke paine by paine.
>
> Any way, (for heaven sake)
> So I were out of your whispering: Tell my brothers,
> That I perceive death, (now I am well awake)
> Best guift is, they can give, or I can take.

It is not only Webster who is kindled to his highest by this sombre splendour of death, seen as a great sunset casting its last light across a desolate world and closing in kindlier darkness a wasted day. Then indeed for a moment the cloud-wrack glitters like gold, though the gold be but a cloud; and Webster's fellows also, Beaumont and Fletcher, Chapman and Massinger, Marston and Dekker are never such poets as when they utter, in lines like Philaster's, the disillusion of a long world-weariness, and their praises of the final release of death.

> Yes I do know, my lord:
> 'Tis less than to be born: a lasting sleep.
> A quiet resting from all jealousy:
> A thing we all pursue: I know besides
> It is but giving over of a game
> That must be lost.

And again—

> 'Tis of all sleeps the sweetest.
> Children begin it to us, strong men seek it,
> And kings from height of all their painted glories
> Fall like spent exhalations to this centre.
> And those are fools that fear it or imagine
> A few unhandsome pleasures or life's profits
> Can recompense this place.

When we revisit the world of these poets so long dead, it seems at times as if the shape of death had walked there always, often horrible, but sometimes with that pale beauty its shadow keeps still, where to-day the cypresses nod and the silver smoke curls quietly from Vesuvius above the ghostly streets of Pompeii. Such is Webster's atmosphere—the individuality of the Renaissance, but also its despair; and with it the courage of despair. This sense of human destiny—not mere playing with skulls and cross-bones, but a nobler thing—is the atmosphere of his two great tragedies; this darkness is a background and a veil for something finer than mere gruesomeness. "In a mist", "in a mist", "in a general mist of error", his men and women pass bitterly, but unblenchingly, away. Indeed it sometimes seems as if he felt courage to be the one vital thing in life. Even his basest, if they live as in Sodom and Gomorrah, die as in ancient Rome. Even the wanton Julia passes not unworthily of her imperial name—

> 'Tis weakenesse,
> Too much to thinke what should have bin done—I go,
> I know not whither.

Even Zanche the Moor turns her loathsomeness into pride—

> I am proud
> Death cannot alter my complexion,
> For I shall neere looke pale.

And so with Lodovico—nothing becomes him like his end.

> I do glory yet,
> That I can call this act mine owne: For my part
> The racke, the gallowes, and the torturing wheele
> Shall bee but sound sleepes to me, here's my rest—
> I limb'd this night-peece and it was my best.

That is the world Webster has imagined and painted and peopled: it is not the creation of a small mind. Is it too grim? For many, yes: for that great majority whose criterion of truth is its pleasantness. Yet let those remember who hanker for Arden and the world of *As You Like It*, that no *As You Like It* can reach the bleak heights of *Lear*; and that the sanity of Goethe drew from the sanity of Homer the lesson that human life on earth is indeed "the enactment of Hell". "This place is Hell" comes Vittoria's own echoing cry. And the consolation? None but the gallant splendour, the ironic laughter of a humanity that

is braver and cleverer than the blind Universe which drags it down. Among the dead piled high in this Valley of Gehinnom, amid the silent fretting of the eternal worm, glows only that red unquenchable fire of human bravery. There remains no other light for those to follow who have seen the falsity of all deluding gleams: and to what goal shall it lead them? To rest, perhaps, at last—"to be laid by and never thought on". They do not indeed live, these characters of Webster's, with this frightful vision perpetually before their eyes: who could? They lose themselves in the loves and lusts, the hopes and hates that suffice to fill the passing day; but always their eyes are opened towards the coming of their end. They see then that they have agonized only after vanities; and that the sleep of death which awaits them now is better. There is talk, no doubt, of Hell and Heaven beyond this life, of the eternal Church and of devils in their livery of flame. Who knows? The prayers and curses that go up to Heaven have, it seems, a great way to go; lovers and children perish, but "the stars shine still". The Muse of Tragedy indeed is of her nature infidel at heart. What room for her in the best of all possible worlds, where all endings are happy at last? It is not the glory of God that she declares, but the glory of man in his doomed defiance of his destiny and the bounds it has set to mortal endeavour, whether it be Prometheus on Caucasus, or Capaneus on the wall of seven-gated Thebes, or Faust in his study, or Macbeth on the wall of Dunsinane. And so it is with Webster's great figures—we know that even in Hell Vittoria would have endured with that contempt upon her face, which Dante saw in the eyes of Farinata degli Uberti in his winding sheet of flame: that even in Heaven among the meek and the poor in spirit the Duchess of Malfi would have been "Duchess of Malfi still".

In such things lies Webster's claim to greatness—not simply in the situations and the characters he has conceived; but still more in the world he has made their stage and their background, in the light of poetry and the darkness of a great despair. It is not merely his people; it is, still more, the atmosphere he makes them breathe. And surely by this we have answered, without thinking, the second great charge against him, of a low morality. His, indeed, is not the sort of morality which a German critic has discovered to be the conclusion of *The Duchess of Malfi*—

erhebt euch nicht höher als Ihr reichen könnt, unternehmt Nichts gegen die Sitte, und seid stets wahr und aufrichtig—

in short, that it is most injudicious in the best circles to marry one's butler. And it is not much better, though less patently ridiculous, to talk of Webster in the words of Stoll, as "a stern justicer of the *folly* of Antonio and the Duchess". A curious justice! No doubt his villains pay for their sins: his good characters pay equally for their virtues. And as far as one can see, in his world as in the real one, it often pays a great deal better to be vicious; a Flamineo appears to get more pleasure out of life, while it lasts, than the virtuous Marcello, a Zanche than a Cariola. Such moralizing comments belong really to the days when critics used regularly to demonstrate to an edified public how the "folly" of Romeo and Juliet brought them to a bad end, and Timon was a warning against "ostentatious prodigality"; how Duncan deserved to be murdered for being so careless where he went to stay, and Desdemona for not looking better after her pocket-handkerchiefs. The charge Sir William Watson brings against Webster is, in short, perfectly true—"virtue in this disordered world is merely wasted, honour bears not issue, nobleness dies unto itself". Only it happens to be true of the real world too. The absurdity lies in the conclusion that "these men had no sober vision of things". There is nothing mean in the view that goodness often does not pay. The meanness lies in demanding that it should. And in any case what an extraordinary attitude is this which treats literature like a housemaid and exacts, first of all, evidence as to its moral character! When Mrs Barbauld complained that *The Ancient Mariner* had too little moral, Coleridge retorted that it had too much; and anyway what does it matter? The greatest writing is, in a French critic's phrase of *Gil Blas*, "*moral comme l'expérience*". Do we ask more? Let us admit that in Webster's tragedies there is little faith except in the courage of despair; little hope, except in the rest of death; and a love that brings only unhappiness. Yet his world is not, as Rupert Brooke describes it (in no sense of dispraise), "a mere nest of maggots writhing in an immense darkness". Could the death of maggots move us? No, not of maggots, but of dwellers, magnificent yet doomed, in an earlier City of Dreadful Night at the feet of that goddess Melencolia, whom Dürer drew, and Webster knew too well,

and James Thomson fashioned again in the image of his own despair—

> They have much wisdom, yet they are not wise;
> They have much goodness, yet they do not well;
> They have much strength and yet their doom is stronger;
> Much patience, yet their time endureth longer;
> Much valour, yet life mocks it with some spell.

This, of course, is an attitude to life that many hate. So *The Times* wrote of Arnold's *Empedocles*, "he is 'disgusted' with the world; a state of mind with which we have no sympathy". And yet most great poetry has looked on human destiny with unconcealed sadness; even the religions have differed more about what we shall enjoy in the next world than what we suffer in this. For the creeds of East and West alike have seen in human life but vanity and vexation of spirit: only the spirit of the West has thrown always the same instinctive defiance in the face of fate, since the day when Achilles chose his brief and crowded hour before the walls of Troy rather than a deedless life and a forgotten age safe amid the mountains of his home. Though defeat be sure, battle, not acquiescence has been the answer; struggle, not surrender; the part of Cuchulain, battling with the resistless sea, not the quiet passivity of Mary of Bethany, choosing "the better part". Is it folly?

> Le vrai sage est celui qui fonde sur le sable,
> Sachant que tout est vain dans le temps éternel,
> Et que même l'amour est aussi peu durable
> Que le souffle du vent ou la couleur du ciel.

We may differ whether this insurgent answer of the West is the wiser one or no; let it suffice that it can be sublime. The wisdom of India may sit with folded hands to dream towards dreamless sleep; but in vain the East has preached its gospel of quietism to the West. When Europe took the Cross, it was to smite the infidel; and the truest text in all Christendom—too true by far—has been the sentence that spoke not of peace, but a sword. And this, if we seek one, is the only conclusion and moral of Webster; he may not have envisaged it; to the modern reader it is there—the paradox of all great tragedy—the sadness, the vanity, but the shattering splendour of the life of man. Perhaps this splendour too is an illusion. For both sides find utterance in his pages—the quiescence of the East as well as

the defiance of the West; and in *The Duchess of Malfi* the doubt falls deeper than ever on the value of everything save death. But clearly it never mastered the writer absolutely. His tragedies would have remained unwritten if it had, and his Vittoria unborn.

And so there is more than mere disgust in Webster. Mere disgust at human littleness, indeed, would never produce tragedy, without a sense of human greatness as well. Yet we may freely admit that, for all the truth in the vision of existence given by *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*, it is not the whole truth: and, being one-sided, it is in danger of becoming monotonous. So that the real accusation, for those who want to belittle Webster because he is not Shakespeare, is that, when great, he is certainly not myriad-minded. Webster is but an onyx beside Shakespeare's many-faceted diamond; the strings are few on which he harps his long lament. Not all larks in the real world are caged, and there are greenwood-trees besides the yew. There is indeed no sign that Webster cared much for nature; and his whole personality, so far as we can guess at it, like Milton's impresses, but does not charm. There is no being intimate with him. Shakespeare, we feel, is self-effacing: Webster stands sombrely aloof. After all, this feeling is more than mere fancy. His contemporaries say almost nothing of him, good or ill; and when their strange silence is broken by the satire of Fitzjeffrey, it is to confirm, however prejudiced Fitzjeffrey may be, the impression of a morose and brooding figure—"crabbed Websterio". Those who share, then, the contempt of La Rochefoucauld for "men who have only one kind of genius", may criticize Webster not indeed as a bad dramatist, but as a narrow one, who saw life passionately and intensely, but who did not see it whole.

It is, however, essential that we should on our side try also to see Webster as a whole. That is not easy. I find that I have written hitherto almost exclusively of the author of *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*: and yet it was inevitable. For that is the Webster who matters. But in our judgment of the man himself we have to remember that he wrote also *The Devil's Law-Case*, and a considerable part at least of *A Cure for a Cuckold* and *Appius and Virginia*; to say nothing of his more clearly defined collaboration, at first with Dekker, later with Massinger and Middleton. And none of these productions is easily

associated with that macabre figure, the Webster of English literary histories, whom the critics have envisaged as a sort of inspired sexton, answering in fierce monosyllables and composing masterpieces by the light of a dark lanthorn among the *Hic jacets* of some whispering graveyard. Few have read the later works; few who have, will easily forget their bewilderment that the farcical humour of *The Devil's Law-Case*, the genteel superficiality of *A Cure for a Cuckold*, or the simple, sturdy pathos and humour of *Appius and Virginia* should ever have been created by the same mind. Without the critic's microscope it would seem plausible to suppose that the two last plays were wholly spurious; and yet in parts of *The Devil's Law-Case* almost as great an unlikeness would remain. No Elizabethan ever possessed to a higher degree than Webster their strange chameleon gift of changing from play to play the whole colour of their style. Webster in these new settings becomes not only often third-rate, but third-rate in an entirely unexpected way. In Greece it was the actor who changed his mask: but in these works, one feels, it is the dramatist himself. How, we wonder, could the creator of Vittoria sink to crave our sympathy, without any apparent sense of how much he is asking, for the petty treacheries of a Lessingham? How forget his flashes of Satanic poetry in the honest journeyman's verse of *Appius*? Not only the poetry, but the man's whole personality seems to wilt and disappear; and nothing less ghastly or ghostly could be imagined than the rather prosaic and uninspired playwright of this later phase. Even between *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* he had somehow written on the death of Prince Henry a poem which is not only poor, but almost illiterate in its feebleness. *The Devil's Law-Case*, indeed, might have been itself not unworthy, on the lower level that belongs to Comedy, of the tragic Webster—a *Measure for Measure* beside his *Hamlet*—did not its last act fly to pieces. With *A Cure for a Cuckold* and *Anything for a Quiet Life* he sinks, in the company of Rowley and Middleton, to his lowest. The plots are crazy, the characters uninviting; the plays contain a few good scenes and they are to me at least more readable than Shakespeare at his worst, say in *Love's Labour's Lost*; but that is not saying very much. *Monuments of Honour*, again, is a curiosity in the way of Lord Mayor's Shows, but not literature. *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, thanks mainly to Massinger

and Ford, does show some return to poetry, to character, to honour, and to sense; Bianca is worthy to be the heroine of a better play, and the mountebank-scenes are vivid and amusing. Finally *Appius and Virginia*, although, like so many of the plays, it falls off in the fifth act, is well worth reading. This is faint praise, but why pretend? It would have been a poor way to try to win appreciation for Webster when he *is* great, to attempt to puff him when he is not.

Is then the popular conception of the sinister Webster a mere figment, and the magnificent despair of those two plays just a happy conformity to the fashionable taste of a moment for Revenge Tragedies and Italian decadence? That cannot be: the popular idea is sound in instinct, however exaggerated, however likely to mislead. We could as soon say that Webster wrote his great works without poetic genius, because his later plays show so little, as that he wrote them without also a tragic greatness in his own soul, whatever became of it afterwards, however much he was following a fashion then. Those fires of Hell, whose glow is felt beneath the palace floors in Padua, may have originally been kindled to boil a pot. But the part of Webster's personality that most matters must somehow have found in this chance dramatic fashion, which his two tragedies were written to obey, its one real utterance. It is as if an actor had spent a long lifetime in playing many parts indifferently; but found once one stamp of character into which he could put all his own. "Webster", then, must really mean for us still, with certain safeguards, the author of *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*; it is after all but the poet's right "to have his chain tested by its strongest link". We need only be careful, when we are trying to picture what Webster himself was like, to avoid the error of past criticism in mistaking an inspired mood for the whole man. That can lead only to caricature. This dark magnificence must have lain buried somehow in Webster's character from first to last: but it early disappears from his writing. He forgot. His power, which was to outlast centuries, died in him, as in Wordsworth, as in Melville, long before his death—in those words of Beddoes, which perhaps echo his own most famous line,

> he died
> Young; as the great will die; as Summer dies
> By drought and its own fevers burned to death.

It was a man who had found his true gift only to lose it, without perhaps even realizing how much smaller he had become, that was carried to his obscure grave we know neither how, nor when, nor where. And by that grave we may wonder at the way chance works in art, and genius itself is "the stars' tennis-ball". But for this momentary popularity of gloomy Italianate tragedy brought into favour by the rantings of Marston and the ravings of Tourneur, would Webster also have been one of those who "never spoke out"? What would he have done, had fate brought him to birth a century later, or two? Might he be remembered merely as the author of some sombre obscurity like Blair's *Grave* or Lewis's *Monk*? It is perfectly possible. And yet if we look for his fellows in those different Englands, there are greater spirits than theirs with whom he might have claimed kinship. The bitterness, the savage wit, the almost morbid rage to strip the mask from the basenesses of human life, the unutterable despair—echoes of this even our Augustan age can wake from that vault, "ubi saeva indignatio cor ulterius lacerare nequit", and the Dean of St Patrick's, his wealth left to build a Bedlam, lies at last forgetful of an intolerable world and "the oppression that makes a wise man mad". And the passion for unbowed courage in the face of doom, the passion for passion itself, however guilty, if it is great enough, the sense of human magnificence in impotence—these in their turn Webster might have thrilled to meet again on the black moorlands around Wuthering Heights.

WEBSTER'S LIFE

WEBSTER'S LIFE

NATUS moriensque fefellit. Of Webster's life we know almost nothing, less than of Shakespeare's, less than of dramatists as distant as Aeschylus or Sophocles, Euripides or Seneca. And yet, in default of knowing a great deal more, we should perhaps be glad that it is so. For from all the vain structures of conjecture based on conjecture based on conjecture, which have been erected in the twilight that covers our greatest poet, we are at least delivered by this deeper darkness shed over Webster's life. His biographers have been reduced to laying hopeful hands on every tailor or tallow-chandler[1] bearing his not uncommon name

[1] The following John Websters have been variously identified with the poet:

(*a*) Persons of this name were *made* free of the Merchant Taylors' Company in 1571, 1576, 1615, 1617 (*Court-Book of the M.T.* vols. I, II, VI). None of these indeed can be the dramatist, who was *born* free of the company; either of the two earlier members might, however, be his father.

A John Webster was also assessed 10*s.* towards the coronation expenses of the Company in 1604.

(*b*) According to J. P. Collier (*Memoirs of Actors*, p. xxxii) the Register of St Leonard's, Shoreditch, records that a John Webster married Isabell Sutton, on July 25th 1590; and that an Alice Webster, daughter of John Webster, was baptized there on May 9th 1606. This statement has been copied by subsequent scholars. A visit to Shoreditch, however, revealed that only the second of these entries really exists. Either Collier invented the other, though it scarcely seems worth inventing; or else he confused St Leonard's with some other church.

(*c*) John and Edward Alleyn acknowledge a debt of 15*s.* to a John Webster, Merchant Taylor, on July 25th 1591 (J. P. Collier, *Alleyn Papers*, p. 14—it is a curious coincidence that this is exactly a year after the supposed marriage just mentioned). This too might be the poet's father.

(*d*) A John Wobster appears at Cassel in August 1596, accompanying one Robert Browne, who had been touring the Continent with an English troupe at intervals since 1590 (Chambers, II. 278). Chambers indeed suggests (III. 507) that this player may have been the same person as the Merchant Taylor of the previous note, to whom the Alleyns owed 15*s.* For that debt seems to have been part of a series of transactions connected with the winding-up of a theatrical company, perhaps the Admiral's, to which the said J. Webster may have belonged. If then J. Wobster the actor, Chambers argues, was the same as J. Webster, Merchant Taylor, it is plausible to suppose further that this person was the dramatist himself. I am not however convinced. The first identification is very uncertain: and I believe the dramatist to have been only a child in 1591 (see (*h*) below) and not an actor at all (see p. 51), but of a rather better class and education.

(*e*) A John Webster, cloth-worker, made a will which he was too ill or

in the records of half a century; and their faith has hardly been rewarded. The one positive fact we know is told us by the poet himself in the preface to *Monuments of Honour*. He was, he says,

too illiterate to sign with more than a mark, on Aug. 5th 1625: it was proved on Oct. 7th 1625.

(*f*) A John Webster, tallow-chandler, made on Feb. 16th 1628 a will which was proved on Nov. 12th 1641.

(*g*) As there are references to "the University" and, twice, to Cambridge in the plays, I made inquiries of Mr J. A. Venn, editor of *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, which had not yet reached the letter W. He informs me that the only person of the name of whom there is record in our period, matriculated at St John's in 1585. But this again is, I fear, too early to be at all likely. The name does not occur at all in *Alumni Oxonienses* (1500–1714). But of course this silence is not conclusive. Webster may have been at either University, especially if, as I shall suggest in a moment, he became a member of the Middle Temple. It is to be remembered that there is a gap in the Cambridge Matriculation Books from 1590 to 1601.

(*h*) I am inclined to attach much more importance to an entry I have found in the *Middle Temple Records*. By the kindness of their Keeper, Mr H. A. C. Sturgess, I am enabled to give the original Latin version: "Primo die Augusti anno 1598, Magister Johannes Webster nuper de Novo Hospicio generosus filius et heres apparens Johannis Webster de London generosi admissus est in Societatem Medii Templi". The epithet "generosus" (gentleman) need cause no difficulty; it was freely given; and will be found actually applied to the dramatist—"Mr. John Webster, Gentleman"—in Howes's continuation of Stowe's *Chronicle* (1615: p. 812). Still, membership does imply some standing. This John Webster does not seem, Mr Sturgess tells me, ever to have been called to the bar; which is what we should expect, if he took to another career. John Ford was likewise never called.

If this Webster was the dramatist, we should have to date his birth about 1580–1; which fits in excellently with the commencement of his literary career in 1602. John Marston, whom Webster imitated, besides writing an Induction to his *Malcontent*, had been admitted to the same Inn in 1592; and John Ford, who contributed eulogistic verses to *The Duchess of Malfi* and collaborated with Webster both in a lost play (1624) and in *F.M.I.*, entered it in 1602. Considering this, the date, Webster's legal knowledge, which is unusual even for an Elizabethan, his fondness for court-scenes, his hatred of (dishonest) lawyers, and his quarrel with Lincoln's Inn, this identification seems to me very tempting. It must however remain for the present a conjecture. John Webster is, of course, a not uncommon name; but it is worth recording that no other John Webster occurs in all the records of admissions to the Middle Temple (1501–1703), to the Inner Temple (1547–1660), or to Gray's Inn (1521–1889); and only one other (1773) in the admissions to Lincoln's Inn (1420–1893).

(*i*) As merest speculations I add three other entries I have discovered.

(1) In the Register of Christ Church, Newgate: the marriage, on April 13th 1579, of "John Webster hosyer and Mary Taylor, servant unto Mr Perkins, pewterer".

These *might* be the poet's parents, supposing him to have been born within the next year or two. And a hosier (there being no Hosiers' Company) might well be a Merchant Taylor.

(2) In the Register of Allhallows, Honey Lane, is recorded the burial

born free of the Merchant Taylors' Company. All else is surmise. And in order to avoid blocking up the text with masses of conjectural matter, I have relegated to a footnote all discussion of the identifications hitherto made. For it is not easy otherwise to keep clearly separate the few things we can say with some certainty.

In any case, that Webster was a member of the Merchant Taylors' Company does not, of course, imply that he ever wielded shears himself any more than Edward III or Henry VII, who equally belonged to the Company. It has been conjectured, wrongly I think, that he was at first an actor[1]. And it seems

on April 18th 1606 in "Paules churchyard" of a John Webster, who *might* again be the poet's father.

(3) Sir John Webster, made a baronet by Charles II and buried in Westminster Abbey on April 14th 1675, mentions in his will a cousin, John Webster of London, draper. These might have been relatives.

[1] Certainly T. Hall calls his reply to the *Academiarum Examen* (1654) of John Webster, vicar of Mitton (1610–82), whom he confuses with the dramatist: "*Histrio-mastix. A Whip for Webster* (*as 'tis conceived*) *the Quondam Player*". Whether this confusion was genuine or assumed, the title is evidence of a sort that the Webster who was "*Author of Stage-plaies* (*as the Devil's Law-case*)" was thought to have been also "a Profane Stage-Player". (I see no evidence for Dyce's theory that "player" = "playwright", a usage unknown to the *N.E.D.*) As however the world at large does not seem even to have known that Webster by then had been dead (probably) some twenty years, its knowledge of him in other directions may well have been vague in the extreme. And we cannot in any case lay much weight on the statements of irate Puritans.

It has been argued, however, that there is other evidence. J. Stephens of Lincoln's Inn in his *Characters* (1615) included a satirical sketch of "A Common Player". In the next edition of "Overbury's" *Characters* (1615) appeared a violent retort in the description of "An Excellent Actor". In reply the angry Stephens produced a second impression of his work (also 1615), in which his friend J. Cocke attacked the anonymous author of "An Excellent Actor" as "an obscure vagrant". Baron A. F. Bourgeois has taken this as a reference to Webster's profession; but closer reading makes it clear that the authorship of "An Excellent Actor" was unknown to Stephens and his friends. They were hitting in the dark.

And so in fact are we. It is perfectly possible that Webster may have been an actor at some time in his life; but I see no evidence worthy of the name, that he was. "Dans la disette des documents, on tire les moindres mots par les cheveux." Indeed the one fairly conclusive piece of testimony seems to have been ignored in this long debate; for the second line of the Prose Epilogue to *The White Devil* implies, to my mind, quite clearly that Webster was not himself an actor.

No one, on the other hand, seems to have drawn from Fitzjeffrey's curious lines—

Crabbed (*Websterio*)
The *Play-wright, Cart-wright*: whether? either! (*ho*—

very doubtful if we can attach any more belief to the statement made by Gildon at the very end of the century that the dramatist became parish-clerk of St Andrew's, Holborn[1]. We cannot say when he was born, except that it was probably after 1570[2] and certainly not much later than 1580, since his career had begun by 1602; nor when he died, except that it must have been after the last work of his we can date with certainty, his share of *A Cure for a Cuckold* and *The Fair Maid of the Inn* (*c.* 1625); but before 1634 when Heywood's *Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels* speaks of him in the past tense among other dramatists then dead[3].

It is a blank history. Of course there is one well-worn method of escape in such cases—to compose an imaginary biography instead of a real one, to sketch the period since we cannot draw the man, and in our ignorance of what he did and suffered, to

the conclusion that the dramatist had at some period been connected with the cartwright's trade. But probably "cart-wright" is only a sneer at the lumbering heaviness of the playwright's works.

[1] Gildon, *Lives and Characters of the Eng. Dram. Poets*, 1698, p. 146. Records neither confirm nor confute this.

[2] *E.g.* Dekker, his senior partner at first, was born *c.* 1572; Heywood, his lifelong friend, *c.* 1570. The Middle Temple entry and the date of his first work favour *c.* 1580.

[3] As pointed out by H. D. Sykes in *N.Q.* 11. VIII. 64 (Heywood is talking of the way Elizabethan poets had their names abbreviated):

> "Famous *Kid*
> Was call'd but *Tom. Tom. Watson*, though he wrote
> Able to make *Apollo's* selfe to dote
> Upon his Muse, for all that he could strive
> Yet never could to his full name arrive.
> *Tom. Nash* (in his time of no small esteeme)
> Could not a second syllable redeeme.
> Excellent *Bewmont*, in the formost ranke
> Of the rar'st wits, was never more than *Franck*.
> Mellifluous *Shake-speare*, whose inchanting Quill
> Commanded Mirth or Passion, was but *Will*.
> And famous *Johnson*, though his learned Pen
> Be dipt in *Castaly*, is still but *Ben*.
> *Fletcher* and *Webster*, of that learned packe
> None of the mean'st, yet neither was but *Jacke*.
> *Deckers* but *Tom*; nor *May*, nor *Middleton*.
> And hee's now but *Jacke Foord*, that once were *John*."
>
> (IV. p. 206.)

All the poets mentioned in the past tense were dead at this time, those in the present still alive. May and Middleton are left ambiguous; and Middleton was in fact dead.

Heywood's work was licensed Nov. 7th 1634.

expatiate picturesquely on all the soul-stirring things he may have witnessed and must have known—the coming of the Armada in his early years, the rise of Marlowe and Shakespeare, the great powder-treason of 1605, the great poisoning of 1613, the sailing of the *Mayflower*, the rise of Gustavus Adolphus and of Richelieu, the first earthquake rumblings of the fall of the House of Stuart and the Church of Laud. But that is too obvious, too vague, too futile a way out. It is to his great cathedral that we are bidden look for the sole monument of Wren; so of Webster there survives no memorial beyond the works he has left. It remains to give in its briefest and barest chronological form all that we have, the record of his writings year by year.

c. 1580. Born.

1598. ?? Admitted to the Middle Temple.

1602. Lent unto the company the 22 of maij 1602 to geve unto antoney monday & mydelton mihell drayton, webester & the Rest in earneste of a Boocke called sesers ffalle the some of . . . . } v^ll

(Henslowe's diary—his spelling is too fascinating to be modernized. The company is the Admiral's, the play *Caesar's Fall*. No more is known of it.

The previous entry of Webster's name in the diary over a play called "the gwisse" (Guise)—Nov. 3rd 1601—is a Collier forgery.)

Lent unto Thomas downton the 29 of maye 1602 to pay Thomas dickers drayton mydellton & webester & mondaye in fulle paymente for ther playe called too shapes (?) the some of } iij^ll

(This play, whatever "too shapes" may stand for, is probably the same as *Caesar's Fall*. Various critics have amused themselves with picturesque emendations, such as "Two Harpies": but none of their suggestions is convincing.)

Lent unto John thare the 15 of october 1602 to geve unto harey chettell Thomas deckers thomas hewode & m^r smythe & m^r webster in earneste of a playe called Ladey Jane the some of . . . . . } l^s

Lent unto thomas hewode the 21 of october 1602 to paye unto m^r deckers chettell smythe webester & hewode in fulle payment of ther playe of ladye Jane the some of . . } v^ll x^s

(Henslowe paid Dekker on Oct. 27th 5*s.* in earnest of a second part. The two parts were probably condensed to make the *Sir Thomas Wyat* published as by Dekker and Webster in 1607. See Appendix I.)

> Lent unto Thomas hewode & John webster the 2 of november 1602 in earneste of a playe called cryssmas comes bute once ayeare the some of . . . . . } iij*li*

(Other payments for this otherwise unknown play are subsequently recorded as made to Chettle and Dekker.)

1602. Verses prefixed to the Third part of Anthony Munday's translation of *Palmerin of England.*

1604. *Induction* to Marston's *Malcontent.*
Westward Ho! (With Dekker.)
Ode prefixed to S. Harrison's *Arches of Triumph.*

1605. *Northward Ho!* (With Dekker.)

1607. Publication of *Sir Thomas Wyat*, *Westward Ho!*, and *Northward Ho!*

1611–12. *The White Devil.* (Published 1612.)

1612. Verses prefixed to Heywood's *Apology for Actors.*
A Monumental Column. (On the death of Prince Henry; registered Dec. 25th 1612, published 1613.)

1613–14. *The Duchess of Malfi.* (Published 1623.)

? 1614–23. *The Guise.* (Lost: see II. 321.)

1615. Contribution by Webster of "New Characters" to the sixth edition of "Overbury's" *Characters.* An attack on the author of "An Excellent Actor", one of Webster's pieces, appears in the second impression of J. Stephens's *Satirical Essays.*

1617. Satirical verses on Webster by Stephens's friend, H. Fitzjeffrey, in *Certain Elegies done by Sundry Excellent Wits.*
New opening written for *The Duchess of Malfi.*

1619–20. *The Devil's Law-Case.* (Published 1623.)

1621. *Anything for a Quiet Life.* (With Middleton.)

1623. Verses prefixed to Cockeram's *Dictionary.*

1624. *Monuments of Honour.* (Lord Mayor's Pageant—Oct. 29th.)
A late Murther of the Sonne upon the Mother. (With Ford: licensed in Sept. Lost.)[1]

c. 1625. *The Fair Maid of the Inn.* (With Massinger and Ford.)
A Cure for a Cuckold. (With Rowley and ? Heywood.)

[1] A little light is thrown on the subject of this play by two entries in the Stationers' Register:

(1) July 2nd 1624. "*The Repentance of* NATHANAEL TINDALL *that kild his mother*...vj d." (A ballad ?)

(2) Sept. 16th 1624. "*A most bloudy unnaturall and unmatchable murther comitted in Whitechappell by* NATHANAELL TINDALL *upon his owne mother* written by IOHN MORGAN...vj d."

1625–34 (? 1626–27). *Appius and Virginia.* (With Heywood?)
Before 1635. Death.

Would we know, beyond this, what manner of man he was—there are the plays. Beside them remains only the curious portrait by an enemy, Henry Fitzjeffrey of Lincoln's Inn[1]:

> But hist! with him Crabbed (*Websterio*)
> The *Play-wright, Cart-wright*: whether? either! (*ho*—
> No further. Looke as you'd be look't into:
> Sit as ye woo'd be *Read*: *Lord*! who woo'd know him?
> Was ever man so mangl'd with a *Poem*?
> See how he drawes his mouth awry of late,
> How he scrubs: wrings his wrists: scratches his Pate.
> A *Midwife*! helpe! By his *Braines coitus*,
> Some *Centaure* strange; some huge *Bucephalus*,
> Or *Pallas* (sure) ['s] ingendred in his *Braine*—
> Strike, *Vulcan*, with thy hammer once againe.
> This is the *Crittick* that (of all the rest)
> I'de not have view mee, yet I feare him least,
> Heer's not a word *cursively* I have *Writ*,
> But hee'l Industriously examine it.
> And in some twelve monthes hence (or there *about*)
> Set in a shamefull sheete my errors *out*[2].
> But what care I? It will be so obscure,
> That none shall understand him (I am sure).

It is a caricature, but not unrecognizable. Here is that familiar imputation of slowness which so nettled Webster, as we may see from his address To the Reader in *The White Devil*. We may believe, too, that there was something "crabbed" in the man who penned these prefaces and dedications—"*prologi galeati*", "prefaces in shining armour", as St Jerome would have called them—where he speaks so scornfully of the public and half-scornfully even of the patrons whose favour he is

[1] In a poem called "*Notes from* Blackfryers" (describing one by one the various types in an audience there before a play), printed in *Certain Elegies done by Sundry Excellent Wits* (mostly by Fitzjeffrey. London. 1617). If we wonder what was Webster's retort to this, it is probable enough that the memory of both Stephens and Fitzjeffrey helped to sharpen the dramatist's pen when he drew that scathing picture of a law-court, with its "spruce lawyer" Contilupo, in *The Devil's Law-Case* of 1619–20. ("*Websterio*" is doubtless a mocking allusion to the Italian subjects of his tragedies.)

[2] This might be an allusion to Webster's attack on Fitzjeffrey's friend Stephens for his Character of "A Common Player" (see IV. 8). Stephens has some verses praising Fitzjeffrey for abating the nuisances of the theatre by his satire, in this same volume. And cf. "shamefull sheete" with Webster's words in "An Excellent Actor" (26–35).

stooping to ask. He "hates flattery": he does not "look up at titles": no patron need fear to find him importunate to press his way "either to ear or table". He makes it quite clear that he is giving honour as well as conferring it; that "the greatest of the Caesars have cheerfully entertained less poems"; and that if he had not thought the work good enough for the patron, he would not have asked for the patronage. There is much to respect in all this. It is better than gushing with the fulsome compliments in fashion at the time; it is better than denouncing flattery like Jonson and practising it. Still, the noble lords may well have thought their poet something of a porcupine. And at such moments we feel that we are far indeed from that grace with which, for instance, Horace, the freedman's son, preserved his quiet, but splendid independence towards the rulers of his world. Still if Webster showed little reverence for nobility of birth, he grudged none to his fellow-poets. And we can admire the frank tribute he pays to the masters by whose light he desires to be read—Chapman and Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Shakespeare, Dekker, and Heywood. His wish has been more than fulfilled. In their company, and in a higher place than most of them, he is read and remembered still—a figure sombre, mysterious, but not, while English remains, obscure.

WEBSTER'S IMITATION

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IT is clear that Webster took literature seriously. How learned he was in the classical part of it, remains a little doubtful; for his quotations from the ancients are more numerous than convincing by their aptness; and when at the beginning of his Lord Mayor's Pageant he says "I could in this my preface by as great light of learning as any formerly employed in this service can attain to, deliver to you the original and cause of all Triumphs", we feel he protests too much. We rather doubt this alleged erudition: though, remembering *Sejanus*, we need not perhaps be sorry. But whatever his knowledge of literature, he at least made the most of it. He had the power of digesting what he read to pure poetry; he soared on borrowed plumes and was sublime by the aid of a commonplace-book.

Webster's imitation of other writers is worth detailed attention. It is with something of dismay, at first, that the reader of Webster discovers one after another of his favourite passages to be lifted straight out of Sidney and Montaigne[1]. For Webster plagiarizes as audaciously as Persius or Sterne. It is only when we realize how arbitrary and exaggerated is the modern horror of such borrowing, and still more when we discover how much Webster betters what he borrows, that our sense of proportion is restored.

Originality is, indeed, a subject on which the present age is a little crazy; as if it had vowed, with Bosola,

> I will not Imitate things glorious,
> No more then base: I'll be mine own example.

Tennyson's life was made a burden to him by the critics who ferreted out his "sources" for saying that the sea "roared"; and it is one of the diseases of our literature that writers think

[1] Both regular quarries at the time. Cf. for instance, J. Stephens: "speeches stolen from plays, or from the common-helping *Arcadia*"; Shirley, *Love in a Maze*, I. 2: "The midwife wrapt my head up in a sheet of Sir Philip Sidney: that inspired me"; Jonson, *Volpone*, III. 1:

> "I mean such as are happy in the Italian
> Will deign to steal out of this author (*i.e. Pastor Fido*), mainly:
> Almost as much as from Montagnie".

they are showing independence of the past when their work is obsessed by anxiety to differ from it. Yet "there is imitation in the planting of cabbages"; or in the more picturesque phrase of Scaliger, "nemo qui non aliquid de Echo". The great writers of the past have wrestled with the spirits of their dead predecessors, like Jacob with the angel in Penuel, instead of running with their fingers to their ears in the opposite direction. No one, indeed, has better described such imitation than Virgil when he said that successfully to take a phrase from Homer was as difficult as wresting the club from Hercules; in other words, that to borrow successfully from a real poet one must be a poet oneself. And so Goethe[1]:

> Ein Quidam sagt, "Ich bin von keiner Schule!
> Kein Meister lebt mit dem ich buhle;
> Auch bin ich weit davon entfernt,
> Das ich von Todten was gelernt";
> Das heiszt, wenn ich ihn recht verstand:
> "Ich bin ein Narr auf eigne Hand".

Of Webster, at all events, it is pretty clear that he kept a commonplace-book[2] and wrote with it beside him. His chief source in *The White Devil* is Montaigne: in *The Duchess of Malfi*, Montaigne and Sidney's *Arcadia*. In the later plays, however, these influences dwindle rapidly. Other sources freely used are Shakespeare, Donne, Chapman, Jonson, Marston, the Bible. The details of this indebtedness are recorded in the Commentary: and most of the borrowings from Montaigne, Sidney, and Donne are also conveniently assembled in the brilliant *Collectanea* of Crawford, who first pointed out their extraordinary extent. Here it is merely a question of illustrating Webster's method, and of doing it justice.

The first point to be noticed is that, like Shakespeare, he prefers turning the prose of others into his own poetry—which is certainly more satisfactory than borrowing from other poets. As the Abbé Delille exclaimed, when it was pointed out that he had borrowed an idea from Bernardin de Saint-Pierre: "N'im-

[1] Similarly Longinus (XIII), Vida (*Poet.* III), Ascham, Jonson ("turn all into honey"), Blake, Wordsworth, and endless others.

[2] For this practice cf. Jonson's *Discoveries*, and Fuller's remark: "I know some have a Common-place against Common-place-books, and yet perchance will privately make use of what publickly they declaim against": Bacon, characteristically, kept four different kinds of them!

porte! Ce qui a été dit en prose, n'a pas été dit". Sometimes he puts his prose source as baldly into blank verse, as Shakespeare turning Holinshed's "Hugh Capet, who usurped the crown upon Charles, Duke of Lorraine, sole heir male of the line and stock of Charles the Great" into

> Hugh Capet also, who usurped the crown
> Of Charles the Duke of Lorraine, sole heir male
> Of the true line and stock of Charles the Great.
> (*Hen. V.* I. 2. 66–8.)

Thus Sidney's lines (*Arcadia II*)—

> O virtue, where dost thou hide thyself? What hideous thing is this which doth eclipse thee? Or is it true that thou wert never but a vain name, and no essential thing? ... O imperfect proportion of reason, which can too much foresee, and too little prevent! ... In shame there is no comfort but to be beyond all bounds of shame—

become in *The Duchess of Malfi* (III. 2. 81–94—I give both in modern spelling to make clearer the essential resemblances)—

> Virtue, where art thou hid? what hideous thing
> Is it that doth eclipse thee?...
> Or is it true thou art but a bare name,
> And no essential thing?...
> O most imperfect light of human reason,
> That mak'st us so unhappy to foresee
> What we can least prevent!
> ....there's in shame no comfort
> But to be past all bounds and sense of shame.

On the other hand, where Webster does make changes, they are almost always for the better—to something more definite, more concrete, more poetical. Thus where Cecropia tells her niece (*Arcadia*, III) "that she was like them that could not sleep when they were *softly laid*", Julia cries (*D.M.* V. 2. 228–9):

> You are like some cannot sleep in *feather-beds*,
> But must have *blocks for their pillows*.

The first phrase is written in water; the "block" stamps itself. So again, where Sidney says of women (*Arc.* III) that "every *dog* is the fiercer for tying", to Bosola the Duchess becomes (*D.M.* IV. 1. 15)—

> *Like English mastiffs* that grow fierce with tying.

And while to Montaigne (II. 12)[1] "The opinion of wisdom is

[1] Florio's translation. 1603.

the *plague* of man", Bosola exclaims (*D.M.* II. 1. 81): "O sir, the opinion of wisdom is *a foul tetter that runs all over a man's body*". The essayist, again, partly translating Cicero, had written (III. 60): "And therefore can I not so often look into the situation of their streets and houses, and those wondrous-strange ruins... but so often must I amuse myself on them...for which way soever we walk, we set our foot upon some history"; and it is with dismay at first that we suddenly recognize the source of one of Webster's most haunting speeches (*D.M.* V. 3. 10 ff.):

> I do love these ancient ruins.
> We never tread upon them but we set
> Our foot upon some reverend history.

Yet after all how little it matters which came first! It is Webster's words that we shall remember.

> And, questionless, here in this open court
> Which now lies naked to the injuries
> Of stormy weather, some men lie enterred
> Loved the Church so well, and gave so largely to't,
> They thought it should have canopied their bones
> Till Doomsday. But all things have their end:
> Churches and cities (which have diseases like to men)
> Must have like death that we have.

For this too a source may be found some day; but we may be sure that, whatever it is, it will lack the cadence, the haunting quietness these lines possess.

At other times Webster takes a passage and alters not so much its form as its whole force and application. Thus Montaigne, writing of the illusions of the human senses, gives this example (II. 13)—"As they who travel by sea, to whom mountains, fields, towns, heaven and earth, seem to go the same motion, and keep the same course they do". But in Webster's hands this piece of purely scientific observation is brilliantly transmuted into a symbol of supreme ecstasy (*W.D.* I. 2. 150–2): "So perfect shall be thy happiness," says Flamineo to his sister, "that, as men at sea think land and trees and ships go that way they go, so both heaven and earth shall seem to go your voyage".

These methods of *marqueterie* are very curious and interesting; their extent, as recorded in the Commentary, may well astonish; yet they need no apology. It is extraordinary how the ideas and phrases thus borrowed seem to change as they enter

Webster's atmosphere. They come alive. Montaigne's honest prose quickens into poetry. The ineptitudes of the *Arcadia* become tragic. And if any reader feels his enthusiasm damped by discovering the degree of Webster's indebtedness to Sidney, the remedy is simple. Let him open the *Arcadia* itself and try to read it through. Sidney's is an honoured name; his poetry can be superb; but his romance remains a rigmarole of affected coxcombry and china shepherdesses such as needs reading to be believed. Extracts give no conception: it must be read continuously. Then it becomes no less illuminating to see what Webster did *not* borrow. We should indeed never have discovered what an amazingly original author he is, had he not plagiarized so widely. Webster remains, with Virgil and Horace, with Michel de Montaigne and Laurence Sterne, one of the great writers whom borrowing has not impoverished, but enriched. Like Midas, what they touch, they turn to gold. And it is for their critics to remember the lines of André Chénier:

> Un juge sourcilleux, épiant mes ouvrages,
> Tout à coup, à grands cris, dénonce vingt passages
> Traduits de tel auteur qu'il nomme; et, les trouvant,
> Il admire et se plaît de se voir si savant.
> Que ne vient-il vers moi? Je lui ferai connaître
> Mille de mes larcins qu'il ignore peut-être[1].

[1] For the most striking series of Webster's borrowings from Shakespeare see Commentary on *W.D.* v. 4. 60 ff.

PLAYS

THE WHITE DEVIL

THE WHITE DEVIL

DATE

THE *White Devil* was finished at some time between 1609 and 1612, most probably in 1611–2.

One limit is fixed by the year of publication—1612. On the other hand the play seems to be later than Jonson's *Masque of Queens* (produced Feb. 2nd 1609) which is, as Simpson first pointed out, the certain source of a phrase of Vittoria's in III. 2. 139 (see Commentary). Such evidence is, of course, never quite water-tight. The borrowed phrase *may* always be a later insertion. Still the probability remains a strong one, that Webster's whole play is later than Jonson's masque. And this is supported by an allusion in v. 3. 186 to the bringing to London of Sir Hugh Myddelton's New River, on which work was begun in 1609 and finished in 1613. Though here again the allusion might be an insertion; and the work had been sanctioned by Parliament some years earlier.

Further, Webster in his preface tells us that his tragedy first appeared in the winter—whether of 1609–10, 1610–11, 1611–12, or 1612–13 (for with the old year running from March to March, a play issued in March 1613 might be dated "1612")[1]. The later dates are slightly favoured by what may be a reference in v. 6. 160 (see Commentary) to the revival of the Honourable Artillery Company in 1610. Again, the sermon preached at Paul's Cross by T. Adams in March 1613, entitled *The White Devil; or The Hypocrite Uncased*, may have sought to attract public interest by recalling a then recent play; though the phrase "white devil" is not in itself an uncommon one.

This is all that can be said with much profit, though pages have been filled by scholars with the ingenious and futile torture of further "evidence". I must apologize for inflicting such a *fatras* of flimsy reasoning on the reader; but it cannot be altogether ignored. Thus Fleay insisted that the right date was

[1] This has, I think, been forgotten in previous discussions of the date. Until 1752 the civil year began in England on March 25th, although dating from Jan. 1st was also in use—a source of constant ambiguity. In France the change had been made as early as 1563.

1607–8, because that winter was a particularly cold one; and because the French Ambassador at Rome is described in III. i. 69 as taking part "at last Tilting", and the only Frenchman recorded to have tilted at the English court during these years is a M. Goterant who performed on March 24th 1607.

All this is the merest wool-gathering. Webster does not say that the winter was cold, merely that it was winter; there is no ground for suspecting any topical allusion in the remark about the French Ambassador; and even if there were, the Jacobean tilt-lists are, as Chambers points out, fragmentary; nor was M. Goterant, for that matter, an Ambassador.

Stoll, again, followed by Vaughan, has argued that the allusions to Irish gambling (I. 2. 29–30) and Irish funerals (IV. 2. 97–8) are based on Barnaby Rich's *New Description of Ireland*, which was registered on April 10th 1610; and that therefore the play must have been written after that date. In answer to this Sykes has very neatly proved in *N.Q.* II. VII. 342 that in the first of these two passages the dramatist is demonstrably *not* drawing on Rich at all, but on Rich's source, Stanyhurst's *Description of Ireland* (1577—see note on *W.D.* I. 2. 29–30). Similarly Webster's reference to Irish funerals probably comes from Stanyhurst also. Rich's book, then, cannot help us to the date.

Another parallel has been seen by Stoll between Vittoria's cry "A rape! a rape!" (III. 2. 285) and *The Atheist's Tragedy*, I. 4 (Mermaid ed., p. 263). Tourneur's play was registered on Sept. 14th 1611; but, as it may have been produced at any time between 1607 and that date, we are not much the wiser, even if Webster's borrowing be assumed. (See on III. 2. 285, which makes it possible that Chapman is the real source.)

Webster's "To the Reader", again, seems to borrow from Jonson's Prefatory Letter to *Catiline* (1611); but clearly *The White Devil* may be years older than a preface written specially for its publication. Stoll, however, argues from the tone of Webster's preface and postscript that these must have been composed soon after the performance, because in them he praises the actors and rails at the audience: whereas Rupert Brooke draws the exactly opposite conclusion that they could *not* have been composed soon after the performance, because Webster says that "since that time" he has observed the type of playgoers who frequent the theatre in question to have merely

a low craze for novelties. Certainly "since that time" implies some interval; and Webster could not make his induction—or pretend to make it—till a certain number of plays, new and old, had been acted after his own. But a few weeks would suffice for that; and it would, in any case, be optimistic to trust too precisely to the assertions of enraged dramatists. Webster's preface cannot really help us to date his play.

Returning to the attack, Stoll sees an allusion to the forthcoming appearance of *The White Devil* in the dedication of Dekker's *If this be not a Good Play, the Devil is in it* to the Queen's Majesty's Servants (1612):

"I wish a *Faire* and *Fortunate Day* to your *Next New-Play* for the *Makers-sake* and your *Owne*, because such *Brave Triumphes* of *Poesie*, and *Elaborate Industry*, which my *Worthy Friends Muse* hath there set forth, deserve a *Theater* full of very *Muses* themselves to be *Spectators*. To that *Faire Day* I wish a *Full, Free*, and *Knowing Auditor*, etc."

"This play," Stoll concludes, "*must* be *The White Devil*." But why "must"? May not Dekker have been friendly with other dramatists besides Webster, who were writing for the Queen's Men? It is of course perfectly possible that Stoll is right. He might even have argued that Webster's preface was worded with direct allusion to Dekker's dedication and that the "so dull a time of Winter", "so open and blacke a Theater", and the lack of any "full and understanding Auditory" of which Webster complains, are reminiscences of Dekker's "*Faire* and *Fortunate Day*", "*Theater* full of very *Muses* themselves", and "*Full, Free*, and *Knowing Auditor*". But as evidence of date the whole thing remains too uncertain.

We may however admit in conclusion that the stylistic resemblances between *The White Devil*, *The Duchess of Malfi* (performed 1613–14), and *A Monumental Column* (written Nov.-Dec. 1612) do make it likely enough that all three were composed fairly close together; which again favours a later rather than an earlier date for *The White Devil*.

Still it is futile to pretend that evidence of this sort can be depended on; and for the date when *The White Devil* reached completion, we must keep as our outer limits, late 1609—early 1613, with a definite leaning towards 1611–12[1].

[1] See also Commentary on I. 2. 134; II. 1. 124; IV. 2. 183.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION
WEBSTER'S SOURCES

"Je n'aime dans l'histoire que les anecdotes, et, parmi les anecdotes je préfère celles où j'imagine trouver une peinture vraie des mœurs et des caractères à une époque donnée."

MÉRIMÉE.

The White Devil is based on a tragedy of real life which had made a deep impression in Italy a quarter of a century before. Through what sort of channel the facts reached Webster is uncertain; but it is a question that must be asked, even if it can hardly be answered. In any case the first step is to compare his version with the actual events as known to us from contemporary accounts. And if the true story of Vittoria is here given at what may seem, perhaps, excessive length, it is partly because certain of its slighter details have an important bearing on the question at issue; but also because the narrative is of extraordinary interest in itself, and nothing can convey better that Siren spell of Renaissance Italy, which fascinated Webster and his audience, and must be felt by the modern reader likewise, before Webster's two great tragedies can produce their full effect. First, however, a brief summary of the plot of *The White Devil* may help to make the comparison easier.

In Webster's play, then, the Duke of Brachiano falls in love with Vittoria Corombona, wife of Camillo, the nephew of Cardinal Monticelso. Her brother Flamineo furthers this intrigue by arranging to have Brachiano's[1] Duchess poisoned, while he himself breaks the neck of Vittoria's husband. Vittoria, however, is at once brought to trial for murder and adultery before Cardinal Monticelso, uncle of the murdered Camillo, and Francisco Duke of Florence, brother of the murdered Duchess; and is by them condemned to confinement in a House of Convertites. Thence she is rescued by Brachiano, who carries her off to Padua, where they are married. Meanwhile the

[1] In what follows, Webster's spelling, Brachiano, is used to denote Webster's hero; and the correct form, Bracciano, for the figure of history. Similarly with Webster's Francisco and the real Francesco de' Medici.

Cardinal is elected to the Papal Throne, as Paul IV, and excommunicates the lovers; while the Duke of Florence, determined to avenge his poisoned sister with more material weapons and helped by a certain Lodovico who had secretly loved her, makes his way in disguise to Padua. There they kill Brachiano by poisoning his helmet.

Flamineo (who has just murdered his brother Marcello in a brawl), seeing his sister thus left the Duke's heiress, tries to blackmail her; but is interrupted by Lodovico and his confederates, who complete their vengeance by killing him and Vittoria together. Before they can escape, however, the murderers are in their turn caught and ordered to execution by the Duke's young son and successor, Giovanni.

The historical events, on the other hand, were as follows:

Vittoria Accoramboni[1], daughter of Claudio Accoramboni and Tarquinia his wife, was born in the North Italian town of Gubbio on Feb. 15th 1557. In girlhood her parents brought her to Rome, and by the time she was sixteen her brilliant beauty had won her many lovers, among them Francesco Peretti (Webster's Camillo), nephew of Cardinal Montalto. It seems, though accounts differ, that neither family was anxious for the match. The ambitious Tarquinia was bound to despise the nephew of one who, though a Cardinal now, had herded swine in boyhood and taught himself to read among them in the meadows from the horn-books lent him by luckier children on their way to school. And the equally ambitious Cardinal had meant his sister's son to wed a rich heiress of the March of Ancona, not a poor daughter of the provincial *petite noblesse*. But Francesco loved Vittoria, and the Cardinal was devoted to his heir, and even Tarquinia must have seen that Montalto had probably a future as well as a past. So in June 1573 the two were wedded in Sta Maria della Corte in Rome, and came to live in the Cardinal's house. The young bride charmed even the stern old man and his sister; but trouble soon began. Vittoria was gay and most of her amusements more extravagant than her strange, probably superstitious, fondness for standing godmother to streams of infant Vittorias; the Cardinal, on the other hand proved not particularly liberal to his nephew, lavishly as he spent

[1] There are numerous variant forms—Accorombona, Corambona, Accaramboni, etc.

his money on charities and building schemes of his own[1]; and of Vittoria's portion of 5000 scudi, 1250 had been sunk in a vineyard bought in the name of her mother-in-law, Camilla, while the rest quickly disappeared in debts. Hence murmurs and family-councils on the part of the Accoramboni, demands for the restoration of Vittoria's dowry intact, plaintive reminders of the carriage the Cardinal had promised the young couple. Tarquinia, sinister as her ancient Roman namesake, began to cast eyes elsewhere. Her daughter was already famous among the beauties of her time, and she had charm as well: "aveva grave il passo," says the disapproving Archbishop Santorio, "gli occhi accesi, la bocca sempre atteggiata a riso e a lusinghe". Vague scandal has coupled her name with Cardinal Farnese, an old man of over seventy. But it was in the rival family of the Orsini that Tarquinia found her tool.

Paolo Giordano Orsini, Duke of Bracciano, head of that proud house which had intermarried with so many of the royal lines of Christendom, had been born some twenty years before Vittoria, about 1537; betrothed in 1553 to Isabella de' Medici, a child of eleven; and married to her in 1558, on which occasion the fief of Bracciano was raised by the Pope to the dignity of a Duchy. In 1571 he had distinguished himself by his courage in command of a galley at Lepanto, though at the siege of Navarino in the following year his already extreme corpulence prevented him from maintaining his reputation. In the same year Isabella bore him their only son Virginio, Webster's Giovanni; but Isabella herself was far from being Webster's virtuous Duchess, and her amour with Troilo Orsini ended in one of those sudden retributions which, like lightning from a clear sky, now and then shattered the careless laxities of Renaissance Italy. On a summer day in 1576 Bracciano was closeted with his brother-in-law Francesco de' Medici, Duke of Florence. Of that interview only Francesco's sinister parting words, by chance overheard, survive—"Ricordatevi d' esser gentiluomo e cristiano". Bracciano withdrew with his Duchess to his villa of Cerreto in Val d' Arno. While they were there, on July 11th Donna

[1] Thus in 1581 Gregory XIII, having noticed in passing the splendour of the new palace that was rising for Montalto, struck him in displeasure from the list of those poorer Cardinals who received a special allowance.

Leonora di Toledo, wife of Isabella and Francesco's younger brother, Piero de' Medici, was stabbed for her infidelities by her husband's poniard; on July 14th Bracciano sent the Duke of Florence a letter of condolence, in his own and his wife's name, on that "strange accident"; and two days later Isabella herself suddenly fell dead—so the story went—as she was washing her hair. But it was commonly believed that she had really been strangled by Bracciano with his own hands. The dead woman was given a magnificent Florentine funeral. In the late December of the following year her fugitive lover, Troilo Orsini, was shot down in Paris as he came from the Court of France by a bravo of the Duke of Florence. The disinterested assassin, returning in triumph, refused any recompense beyond the privilege of kissing the Duke's hands. So, at last, the honour of "gentlemen and Christians" was satisfied in full[1]; and Bracciano lacked a wife.

His confidential chamberlain at this time was, as it happened, Vittoria's brother Marcello, the Flamineo of Webster. Whether or no he first excited his master's passion for his sister, he certainly inflamed it with all his power—and even, said rumour, with the philtres of a Greek witch, who reappears transformed in Webster as Zanche the Moor. Bracciano himself is described as of a not unpleasing countenance, pale complexion, smiling look, and reddish hair; but he was by now past forty and so morbidly corpulent that it was hard to find a horse to carry him. Yet his passion for Vittoria seems to have been genuinely returned. Meanwhile, however, Marcello brought trouble on his own head by murdering Matteo Pallavicino in Rome, in the summer of 1580; he was banished the city, but used to make clandestine visits to his old haunts, sheltered by the kindly Francesco Peretti. But Peretti, though convenient as a host, was yet more inconvenient as husband of a sister who might, without him, have been by this time Duchess of Bracciano. Late on the night of April 16th 1581 a letter from Marcello was brought to the house of Peretti, who was already in bed, by a certain Domenico di Acquaviva, called il Mancino, whom

[1] *Thuanus Restitutus* (1663), p. 22, suggests another motive than honour for Francesco's sacrifice of his sister, and states that both Isabella and Leonora had involved themselves in intrigues of a political nature also, against the Duke of Florence.

Peretti had befriended and was therefore fool enough to trust. The writer most urgently implored his brother-in-law to meet him at once at a rendezvous near the vineyard of the Sforza on Monte Cavallo. In vain Peretti's mother Camilla and Vittoria herself implored him not to venture so late in the unsafe streets of Rome. The young man set out with one torch-bearer. As they approached the appointed place, along a narrow road between high walls, suddenly three arquebus-shots rang out. Peretti fell, and the servant fled; the work was finished with the dagger. The victim was quietly buried in Sta Maria degli Angeli close by; and the shrill lamentations which filled the house of the Peretti were silenced by the Cardinal, who showed the world not a sign of grief for the heir he had loved. Montalto was not meek, but he desired to inherit the earth. For Gregory XIII could not live much longer; and the Cardinal was willing to leave to the Lord that vengeance which perhaps as the Lord's Vicar he might hereafter repay. The glassy composure with which he received all condolences, even the Pope's, and actually begged that no inquiry might be made into the crime, wrung from Gregory himself the muttered exclamation—"Costui è un gran frate" ("a great friar", that is, "a great hypocrite"). And the Holy Father's comment was echoed by Bracciano himself, as he too went away from a visit of cynical condolence to the Cardinal, which was watched by hundreds of curious eyes.

For the secret was insolently ill-kept. The Cardinal sent back his nephew's wife to her family, with her portion and with gifts; within three days she and her mother had installed themselves, "for safety against judicial proceedings", in the palace of Bracciano. Few were deceived by a letter which now arrived from the outlawed Cesare Pallentieri at Florence, avowing that it was he who had murdered Peretti, as the result of a private quarrel. A half-hearted judicial investigation only succeeded, by the beginning of the following year, in extracting from Domenico di Acquaviva the statement that the murder had been plotted by Vittoria's mother, Tarquinia, and carried out by two servants of a certain Signore whose name "for sufficient reasons" was not published. Such sufficient reasons and, probably, the influence of Montalto, anxious not to make great enemies before the next Papal election, prevented further inquiry; a year later

Domenico was merely banished from Rome to his native town and bidden stay there on pain of death[1].

But if the past was lightly overlooked, there were limits to the Pope's indulgence for the future. At the end of April 1581, within a fortnight of the murder, Bracciano had secretly married Vittoria by setting a ring on her finger in the presence of a witness—that is, no doubt, "per verba de presenti", like Antonio Bologna and his mistress in *The Duchess of Malfi*. But on May 5th Vittoria was summoned before the deputy of the Vicario, who read out to her a Papal Monitory to the effect that any marriage contracted by her without the Pope's special permission would be null. The shrewd saw in this precaution the workings not merely of outraged morality, but of the Medici, anxious that their dead sister's son should not be subjected to a stepmother of baser blood, and of the Spanish Ambassador who was jealous for the honour of Bracciano, as one of the foremost adherents of his king in Italy. A fortnight later came a second Papal injunction commanding her to return from the Duke's villa at Magnanapoli to her own home and to hold no communication with him henceforward. In vain the Orsini sought audience with the Holy Father and revealed his secret marriage; ill with helpless rage, he hid himself in his castle of Bracciano and thence, with a sudden revulsion of feeling, wrote humbly to Gregory a letter of gratitude for having saved him from himself. Vittoria likewise sickened, amid the condolences of the ladies of Rome; she vowed a pallium to Madonna de' Monti for her recovery; and in June when her health returned, Madonna de' Monti duly received a pallium more magnificent, as the curious noted, than anything Vittoria Accoramboni could have afforded to bestow.

In September the Duke was again endeavouring to have the Monitory withdrawn and once more took his mistress beneath

[1] Five years later, Montalto, now Pope, told the Venetian Ambassador bitterly: "che dalla prima hora che ebbe nuova della morte di quell' infelice, haveva rimesso ogni cosa in mano del signor Dio, e che sebbene papa Gregorio mostrò di far voler qualche cosa, non solamente non lo fece, ad istanza sua, ma operò con mezzi termini poco convenienti, perchè di poi formato il processo, se lo fece dar in mani sue da monsignor Portico che ora vive, nè se n' è saputo altro, ed il servitore del signor Francesco, che fù fatto prigione come spia che lo conducesse al macello, fù fatto dare dal Pontefice in mano del signor Giacomo nè si è poi saputo cosa alcuna di lui." (Lorenzo Priuli to the Doge, Feb. 15th 1586. *Archivio Veneto, Dispacci Romani*, quoted by Huebner, *Sixtus V* (*Eng. trans.* 1872), I. 234).

his roof; once more she was ordered back to her home and, in December, arrested and carried off before the eyes of a vast concourse to Sta Cecilia in Trastevere, thence to St Angelo for trial. In vain Bracciano stormed at the Governor of Rome and Cardinal Savelli. Yet, apart from the deposition of Domenico, nothing came of the investigation; the Medici felt they had humbled their brother-in-law enough and that the balance of power against Cardinal Farnese must be maintained; and meanwhile Vittoria was charming the Governor of St Angelo and, as usual, standing godmother to his daughter. At the same time, with spirit unbroken, she insisted on being treated as Duchess of Bracciano and retaining her husband's ring. In July, 1582 however, there came a letter from him addressed to the "Signora Vittoria Accoramboni" and coldly announcing that, in obedience to the Pope, he released her from all ties to him. It was too much—only the quickness of her waiting-woman saved her as she flung herself from a window of the Castle of St Angelo. Vainly the Pope urged her to take another husband, or the veil; she would not obey, nor Gregory release her, until at last in November 1582, moved by St Carlo Borromeo's "If she is guilty, then punish her; if she is innocent, then let her go", he ordered her to return to her native Gubbio and stay there on pain of a fine of ten thousand ducats, for which her father had to give security. Thither, accordingly, after friendly interviews with the Pope and Montalto, she withdrew. The beginning of the new year, 1583, was spent by her in a tactful correspondence with the Vatican which recovered for her, first of all, freedom of movement. Next she pleaded for freedom of marriage, always excepting "quello che sappiamo"—"him we wot of". This brought a usefully ambiguous reply from Mgr Pirro Taro to the effect that all the Monitorii and Precetti were now annulled and she might do as she would, only observing inviolate "that which you have written to His Holiness". This politely vague allusion it was just possible to twist into a reference merely to her general promises to be good in future; at all events Vittoria was careful to disturb none of the vagueness in her reply.

In September 1583 Bracciano, on the plea of a pilgrimage to Loretto, asked the Pope for a promise that his territories should be left unmolested in his absence; the Pope consented and, suspecting nothing, requested him to examine on his way the

defences of Ancona against the Turks. From there, after his visit to Loretto, the Duke wrote to Vittoria, asking her to meet him at Trevi, on a spur of the Apennines between Foligno and Spoleto. They met; and she was brought back in triumph to Bracciano. There pliant theologians, to whom the Duke set forth the letters of Pirro Taro and the whole course of past events, gave their verdict that he not only might, but must, marry Vittoria. So on October 10th a second marriage was celebrated before numerous witnesses and a princely settlement made in Vittoria's favour. And yet when the Cardinal de' Medici, alarmed by persistent rumours, questioned his brother-in-law point-blank, he was deceived by the very blatancy of Bracciano's denial that anything whatever had occurred.

For a little, then, "Duke Accorambono", as mockers of his uxoriousness called him, and his young Duchess were happy. But in the following summer of 1584 he was attacked by a malignant ulcer in the leg, which according to medical ideas of the time had to be fed by the application of raw meat, to stay it from devouring the limb itself. Owing to his unhealthy fatness the surgeons sent by the Cardinals de' Medici and d'Este hesitated to perform the amputation they feared to be necessary; and while they doubted, Bracciano was able to rally and, for the time, recover. By the end of the year he was well enough to take Vittoria with him to Rome, where, though she dared not appear in public, she was visited and saluted as "Excellency" by Roman society. They even called upon Cardinal Montalto who embraced them, say the cynical *Avvisi di Roma* of Jan. 12th 1585, "with fraternal affection". The Duke now determined to throw himself on the Pope's mercy, offering to build a monastery for the Frati di S. Giovanni e Paolo; through his diocesan, the Bishop of Sutri, it was suggested that the case be laid before three or four theologians; and even the Cardinal de' Medici, duped and hostile so long, now consented to plead Bracciano's cause. But failure followed; after an interval spent by the Duke in frantic suspense that vented itself in childish letter after letter from his castle to the commission, until the Cardinal de' Medici impatiently bade him be quiet, the theologians decided against him at the end of March. In vain he handed over to justice ten banditti of fame. On April 3rd 1585 the *Avvisi* report that a new Monitorio has been prepared

summoning the Duke to Rome, though it is not known if it has actually been sent. He wrote to Cardinal Cesi, offering to resign Vittoria; but really he was playing for time, while the Pope was busy receiving with much ceremony an embassy from Japan; for he was in hopes that Venice would appoint him Governatore Generale of her forces. But a week later, on April 10th, Gregory XIII was dead. The Duke and Duchess hurried to Rome. Other theologians decided that with the Pope's death his prohibitions had lost their validity. And on April 24th, after delays caused by the opposition of one of Vittoria's brothers, the bishop of Fossombrone, they were wedded, for the third time, in the Church of Grottapinta, near the Campo dei Fiori. But an hour later on that same day, from the door of the Conclave in the Vatican, the voice of the Cardinal de' Medici was proclaiming to a disappointed and murmuring populace—"I bring you tidings of great joy. We have for Pope the most Illustrious and Reverend Signor Cardinal di Montalto, who takes for his title the name of 'Sixtus V'".

The worst had happened, although Bracciano had strained all his influence to prevent the election of the uncle of the murdered Peretti. At his first public audience the new Pope met the Orsini's greetings with grim silence. As fruitlessly Vittoria visited Camilla, her dead husband's mother; as she departed, the old woman turned to those about her with the words, "The monstrous wickedness of it! Even now that woman dares show her false and cruel face within these walls!" Seriously alarmed, Bracciano craved a private audience with the Pope, to ask for the pardon of Marco Bracciolini, one of his followers, who lay in prison at Tordinona. In answer to his compliments the Pope was long silent. Then he said: "No one desires more than I, that the life of Orsini should be as noble as his rank demands. Whether in the past it has been that, let him ask his own conscience. The wrongs done to Cardinal Montalto are forgiven you. But if any are attempted against Pope Sixtus —if any are attempted against Pope Sixtus—they will not be forgiven. To a good Orsini I will be a good Pope; to a bad, a bitter one. Go at once and clear Bracciano and your palace of every bandit". "Haveva Sisto," observes the Anonimo del Campidoglio, "meravigliosa efficacia in ogni maniera di dire"; and with considerable haste Paolo Giordano and his Duchess

removed from Rome, "to take the baths at Abano". The head of Marco Bracciolini appeared on a spike above the walls of Tordinona.

On May 21st they left their castle of Bracciano for the last time, on a new pilgrimage to Loretto, and passed thence by Fossombrone and Urbino to Venice, the ancestral friend of the house of Orsini. There the Duke had a great reception, but the high office he coveted was not offered him, for fear of the Pope's displeasure; in July they settled down to a brilliant social life in Padua, where they rented two palaces, and set about regaining the favour of the Medici by abject letters to Francesco and to Bianca Capello who had risen, even more dramatically than Vittoria herself, from the wife of a mean Florentine to be Grand Duchess of Tuscany. But the Medici were evasive; they were turning more and more from the father to the young Virginio Orsini, their murdered sister's son. Meanwhile two of Bracciano's followers had been arrested in Rome by the Pope's orders and examined on the rack concerning the murder of Peretti four years ago; and his old ulcer had broken out afresh. In October he made a new will, with lavish provision for Vittoria: she was to have her dowry of 5000 scudi, an extra-dowry of 20,000, 70,000 more within two years of his death, 16,000 to provide a palace in Rome and 6000 towards a vineyard, together with his furniture and movables. The rest, with his dominions, was to go to his son Virginio. The Dukes of Ferrara and Urbino were appointed executors. In November Vittoria and her sick husband moved to Salò on Lake Garda; perhaps she was planning to get him near, if not beyond, the frontiers of Italy. But he was sinking fast; and on November 13th, having disobeyed his doctor's orders to fast, he died. The inevitable whispers of poison followed, pointing particularly at Francesco de' Medici. The Grand Duke would doubtless have been only too glad to help on his way a brother-in-law who had become extremely troublesome; but there is no evidence for the charge, nor is it needed to explain the death of a corpulent man of fifty suffering from a dangerous disease. Vittoria tried to pistol herself, in vain.

At Rome, meanwhile, the *Avvisi* of the moment state that the process against the Duke is almost concluded and the Pope about to write to all reigning princes, declaring Bracciano a

rebel and his possessions forfeit to the Papal State. The Medici grew alarmed for their nephew's heritage and under cover of a hunting-party the Cardinal de' Medici reinforced the garrison of Bracciano. Their next step was to deal with the Accoramboni and her extravagant legacies. Vittoria was aware of her danger, even without warning letters from her brother the bishop of Fossombrone quoting dismally—"Il mal mi preme e spaventa il peggio". Since, however, her life was to go on, she was determined to fight for her position. So after having a portrait made of her dead husband and leaving his body in the care of the Capuchins in the Chiesa del Carmine, she left Salò for Padua. At Verona she encountered Lodovico Orsini on his way to seek her at Salò.

Lodovico degli Orsini di Monterotondo, though this was perhaps unknown to Webster when he drew him, was a younger kinsman of Paolo Giordano, whose confidant and right hand he once had been. But he appears to have resented the whole entanglement with Vittoria; and now, too, he doubtless felt that his family loyalty belonged to the young Virginio, so much of whose patrimony this adventuress had intercepted. His past life had been typical of the age. In 1582, in revenge for the death of his brother-in-law in an insolent attack on the Roman police, he had had Vincenzo Vitelli murdered in his own carriage as he was coming from supper with the Governor of Rome; banished from the city in consequence, he wrote to the Grand Duke of Florence explaining, with that incredible mixture of *naïveté* and cynicism characteristic of the period, that he had had no choice about assassinating his enemy, seeing that duelling was forbidden by the sacred canons. After a period spent as a bandit, he at this time stood high in the Venetian service as Governor-designate of Corfu. Between him and Vittoria a duel to the death now began.

A certain amount of property she seems to have surrendered. But her appeal to Venice for protection received a sympathetic answer and she was also conciliating the Pope with suggestions of taking the veil; in consequence her resistance stiffened. Her lawyer Marcantonio Pellegrini obtained for her from the Podestà of Padua full legal possession of all Bracciano's property in the territories of Venice. At this Lodovico, who had been writing complacently to the Medici that everything was per-

fectly secure, "spat venom". He had been outwitted by the woman he hated and all his efforts now could only obtain the slight concession that the property should be sequestered till the case had been heard before the Podestà on Monday, December 23rd. That hearing never came. On the Sunday night[1] there were high revels in the palazzo where Lodovico had collected half a hundred gentlemen and ruffians of his following. Thence in the darkness of the winter evening a band of fantastically masked figures made its way to the Palazzo dei Cavalli, where Vittoria was living. Two traitors had left the doors open; Vittoria was at prayer, for it was the eve of Santa Vittoria's Day, and the voice of her young brother Flamineo (Webster's Marcello), singing the *Miserere* to his lute in the next room, deadened the sound of approaching feet. At the first shot Flamineo turned to flee; a second hit him in the shoulder, and he crawled screaming into his sister's bedroom, pursued by the three chief of Lodovico's ruffians. Vittoria was on her knees before her crucifix. The boy was pricked with swords from beneath the bed, weeping and crying for mercy, and stabbed in more than fifty places. They turned to Vittoria. "Now you are to receive the reward of your iniquities." In vain she begged time to confess. Then, as their rough hands tore open her dress, she cried, "I forgive you; but I will die clothed". While Count Paganello and Splandiano Adami of Fermo held her, Tolomeo Visconti of Recanati plunged his dagger in her breast and, working it in the wound, asked her with obscene jests, "Do I touch your heart?" Moaning "Gesù. . . perdono", their victim died; while, struck with a sudden revulsion, Visconti exclaimed, "Ohimé! What have we done? We have killed a saint!" Finally after a disappointed search for valuables, bidding the maestro di casa hold himself answerable to the Grand Duke for all the property in the house, the assassins departed.

When the news spread, Padua was in uproar; the gates were shut and messages despatched to The Ten at Venice. The Podestà, in consequence of information received, summoned

[1] The various narratives (*e.g.* even Huebner and Stendhal) have made an extraordinary muddle of the exact date of Vittoria's murder, ranging from Dec. 18th to 23rd. It is of slight importance. But as we are told it was a Sunday night and also the eve of Sta Vittoria's Day (Dec. 23rd), and as Dec. 22nd 1585 does actually work out to have been a Sunday, there is no reason for doubt.

Lodovico Orsini before him. He came, but with fifty men at his back. The magistrates ordered him to be admitted with not more than one or two; whereupon the remainder forced their way in after him. To the authorities Lodovico blustered violently that he had been insulted and that never King nor Pope had dared treat him so. Questioned whether some of the murderers were not concealed in his palace, he denied all knowledge and added that the Orsini were not accustomed to being interrogated, ending insolently, with words that were perhaps to reach Webster's ears, "There is indeed a phrase I learnt at school —'Manet alta mente repostum'"[1]—though whether he meant that the knowledge lay deep in God's mind, or his own, or intended a mere quibble on the Italian "altamente", or was hinting that his too was an ancient grudge like that of Virgil's Juno, it is hard to say. That evening with no following, by the light of half a dozen torches, the bodies of Vittoria and her brother were borne from her home and laid out in the Chiesa degli Eremitani, from whose walls looked down the great frescoes of Mantegna. At the sight of her lying there with bared and wounded breast, the populace were inflamed to fury—"dentibus frendebant", says one vivid phrase. They had not long to wait.

On the next day, Christmas Eve, the Avogador Luigi Bragadino arrived in Padua from Venice, and in Venice at the same time, on the receipt of a second despatch from the authorities of Padua, The Ten convoked the Senate. Further, a messenger, whom Lodovico had been permitted to send to the Medici with an approved letter, was intercepted at Rovigo, searched, and found to have on him a secret missive also, in which Lodovico exulted over his success in the murder, and in duping the Dogberries of Padua. Lastly, late that night came orders from Venice that the Orsini be taken, dead or alive.

The following morning the Christmas services in the churches of Padua were broken by the tocsin and the cry, "Arme! Arme! figli di San Marco". With barricades, trenches, and artillery, all who could bear arms in Padua proceeded to invest the three dozen desperate men who had fortified themselves in the Palazzo Contarini on the banks of the Brenta. Lodovico refused to

[1] Virgil, *Aeneid*, I. 26 (referring to Juno's ancient hate of Troy because of the Judgment of Paris and her jealousy of Ganymede).

capitulate except on conditions: but Venice would treat for conditions with none lower than crowned heads. The guns opened. In vain the Orsini kept shouting wildly, "Guerra! Guerra!"; the walls of his palace crumbled, burying their defenders beneath them, before the salvoes of the artillery. There was nothing for it but surrender; Lodovico gave up his sword and, having been placed under arrest, proceeded to lean nonchalantly against a wall and trim his nails with a small pair of scissors. The Republic of Venice, he observed, might congratulate itself on having made a prisoner of Lodovico Orsini; it was more than Pope Gregory or any other Signore could boast of having done. Search in his house revealed bloody daggers and a silver flask with the Medici arms, which had been once Isabella's, then Vittoria's; his followers were immediately put to the torture.

The evidence reached Venice on the morrow, St Stephen's day, Dec. 26th; by the small hours of the 27th the verdict was brought back to Padua—"Death within three hours". Venice was resolute that there should be no time for the other powers of Italy to intercede. After the prisoner had been tricked into letting himself be manacled, the sentence was read; but it wrung no comment from him beyond the stoic Italian "Pazienza!" In all due ceremony he was strangled with a cord of crimson silk (Dec. 27th 1585). The fine and generous letter he wrote in his last moments to his young wife in Venice is still extant, as one more witness to the incalculable mixture of qualities in the human heart. The year dragged to its close with the executions of his miserable followers, till even the populace of Padua sickened of axe and red-hot tongs. The justice of Venice was done.

The other actors in the tragedy found also for the most part swift and evil ends. The Grand Duke Francesco, whose complicity in Vittoria's murder, probable in any case, is confirmed by sinister allusions in the correspondence between him and Lodovico to "that which is best not written", died mysteriously two years later; and the highly-coloured legend tells that it was of poison intended for his brother the Cardinal by his wife Bianca who, seeing what had happened, swallowed the rest herself[1]. The villainous Marcello, who accidentally escaped his

[1] There is a vivid account of this in Fynes Moryson's *Itinerary* (C. Hughes, *Shakespeare's Europe*, p. 94): it is however probably untrue.

sister's fate (he had just previously fled from Padua, after knifing a servant whom he owed money), was with endless insistence extracted by Sixtus from Venice and executed at Ancona in the following June "for the murder of Matteo Pallavicino". That pretence, at least, might have been spared. At the same time was burnt the Greek sorceress he had used to infatuate Bracciano. So the murdered Francesco Peretti might rest in peace at last. His body was taken from its obscure grave to be reinterred with great pomp, in the presence of eighteen Cardinals, in the Sistine Chapel of Sta Maria Maggiore, where Sixtus himself was soon to come to lie. Lastly, in 1589 the dead youth's niece Flavia was united with his murderer's son Virginio in a marriage celebrated with a *canzone* from the pen of Tasso himself. It was a great triumph for the grim, silent resolution of the old Pontiff who by that same quality had restored the peace of Italy and the architectural splendours of Rome; yet as he too lay on his death-bed in the year that followed, with the thunder rattling above the Quirinal Hill, the populace muttered that it was surely Satan come at last to carry off the soul that in return for the Triple Crown had been sold him long ago.

Vittoria remains a mystery, deeper even than most human beings, but a fascinating one. Martyr or Devil?—her own age could not agree. Her beauty and her strange charm alone remained[1] unquestioned. Elegies mingled with satires at her death, dirges for the innocent lamb rent by a bear (*orso*—Orsini) and avenged by the lion of Venice[2], with such mockeries as the savage epitaph in the Roman *Avvisi* of Jan. 11th 1586:

> Flora et Phryne,
> Convocatis lupanaribus, imitatrici
> Caenotaphium.

Only the day before, her brother the Bishop of Fossombrone had preached her funeral sermon, in which he wisely laid the emphasis upon her saintly end: "non sapendo horam qua fur veniret, vigilabat et orabat; così orando la trovarono". But Archbishop Santorio is less partial, when he sums up Bianca

[1] She appears also to have been a poetess; a certain number of poems still extant were at one time mistakenly attributed to her; but one possibly genuine is quoted by Gnoli, p. 310.

[2] *E.g.* Blandula ovis, dum nocte fero laceratur ab urso,
Ursus magnanimi praeda leonis obit. (Odorici, p. 40.)

Capello, Duchess of Tuscany, as "pari alla Accoramboni di vizi e di libidine, di fortuna più chiara".

Vittoria is in this like Mary Stuart—those who argue her innocent, imply her half-witted. She was accessory to the murder of a husband who loved her, after the fact, if not before; at the treacherous summons of that April night of 1581 she must have guessed, if she did not know; soon she knew, in any case, and it made no difference to her relations with her lover. Was she merely heartless and ambitious? Bracciano was indeed nearing fifty, and so fat that he had a dispensation about kneeling in the Papal presence. But that is not so conclusive against her passion as some seem to think. Her ambition was doubtless real; so, it would seem, was her love; so, at the last, was her piety and, always, her courage. Were it only in that, she was born for a heroine of Webster's worship. Indeed, that the world does not see more like her, is due in part to the greater kindliness, but still more to the weaker courage, of common humanity. "Pecca fortiter," said Luther; there at least she did not fail.

> La gran Vittoria io son che 'l pregio tolsi
> Di beltate alle greche e alle latine.

Even at the time it seemed to men that a tragic drama had been enacted before their eyes. "Certe posset una tragoedia componi," writes the cerimoniere Alaleone of her fate, "sed non est meum hoc." And Santorio mentions an actual dramatization: "scio ego apud quosdam actitatum tragoediae argumentum datumque spectantibus in scaena haud suppressis personis nominibusque"[1]. Webster was able to make her story immortal by his sheer poetry; more tragic not even he could make it than the truth.

Such are the facts on which Webster based his play. In what form had they reached him? Scholars have differed whether this was probably written or oral. It is a difficult question. Certainly there were plenty of written accounts; "questa tragedia," says Tempesti, "fu descritta da cento e cento autori".

[1] *Annales eccles. Greg. XIII, Sixt. V, et cet.* I. p. 59. (Vallicellana MS. K. 6)—quoted by Stoll. It is strange that Stoll should rule out Gnoli's suggestion that we have here an allusion to *The White Devil* on the ground that Italy could know nothing of English drama "for yet many a day" (p. 87), for he has himself quoted on p. 29 Orazio Busino's description of a performance of *The Duchess of Malfi* (1617–18). But in fact Santorio died in 1602

And on many points Webster seems very circumstantially informed; yet in other ways he garbles the facts to an extent that seems impossible for any written Italian account of notorious events that had occurred only twenty-five years before Webster wrote. I do not think it possible to establish much probability one way or the other. However the first step, clearly, is to analyse Webster's departures from the truth.

First, then, he has changed many of the names—"Virginio" to "Giovanni"; "Francesco Peretti" to "Camillo" (perhaps because Peretti's mother's name was Camilla, though it may also be noted that Vittoria had a soldier-brother called Camillo, which might account for Marcello having that profession in the play). "Tarquinia", again, is altered to "Cornelia"; "Marcello" to "Flamineo" and *vice versa*; "Montalto" to "Monticelso"; and "Sixtus V" to "Paul IV". Further, Webster has made Brachiano's Duchess and Vittoria's mother good characters instead of bad, Vittoria's husband a mere dolt in place of an unhappy youth of whom we only know that he loved and trusted and sacrificed himself too generously. His Cardinal has none of the greatness of Sixtus V and fades quite undramatically out of the action after amusing the audience with the pageantry of a Papal Election. Nothing is preserved of the tragic irony of that twenty-fourth of April 1585, which saw Bracciano's final marriage and, an hour later, the election to the Triple Crown of the avenger he had frantically strained all his influence to exclude. Even the central vendetta of the play is different, and Brachiano's fall becomes revenge for the blood, not of Vittoria's husband, but of Brachiano's wife. Further, the murders of these two victims are linked by the playwright in time and in cause, as they never were in reality; and are effected in both cases by quite unhistoric means—a poisoned picture and a vaulting-horse. Similarly the deaths of Brachiano and Vittoria are made to occur almost at the same time and in the same place—at Padua. Lodovico becomes, instead of a loyal kinsman, the enemy and murderer of Brachiano and the lover of his Duchess. Webster has also added to Flamineo's already overburdened character the double fratricide, committed on Marcello, attempted on Vittoria; he has omitted the set siege of Lodovico by all Padua in arms; and he has added three mad scenes, two ghosts, and a wealth of imaginative episode.

On the other hand *The White Devil* contains many minor details which seem based on the actual facts and in some cases, even, need a knowledge of those facts in order to be fully understood. The most striking instance is the "Manet alta mente repostum" uttered so much less appropriately by Isabella in II. 1. 265 than, in the real story, by the defiant Lodovico before the magistrates of Padua[1]. The allusions to the pirates (II. 1. 88, 145, 356) have a general truth of historical colour, for the problem was seriously troubling Italy at the time and, in particular, Bracciano himself in 1583 offered the Pope four galleys for service against them, though the offer was refused at the instance of the Medici who feared that it might make Bracciano too popular. The Orsini's famous corpulence is curiously transferred to the Grand Duke (II. 1. 183); and his accusation of Monticelso in the trial-scene, as defrauding Vittoria and her husband (III. 2. 165), is clearly an echo of the grievances of the Accoramboni family over her portion; while the "Arraignment" as a whole is a glorious expansion of the abortive trial that followed her arrest. The House of Convertites and Flamineo's remark (V. 4. 35)—"Say that a gentlewoman were taken out of her bed about midnight, and committed to Castle Angelo"—may perhaps have been suggested by Vittoria's sudden arrest and confinement, first in the nunnery of Sta Cecilia, then in St Angelo. Even the guilty "summer-house" (III. 2. 202) may be, so to speak, a reconstruction of the Duke's villa of Magnanapoli. Again the quarrel of the lovers in the House of Convertites over Florence's letter might just possibly owe something to the wild despair of the real Vittoria in St Angelo when she received Bracciano's letter renouncing her. Her brother, who speaks of being a Cardinal's minion (V. 1. 120), is supposed to have actually stood in that relation to Cardinal Farnese; his murder of Marcello may be an adaptation of his actual assassination of the servant at Padua; and his attempt to extort from Vittoria some of her newly-inherited wealth recalls her real struggle with Lodovico for Bracciano's property, just as Flamineo's attempt to make her shoot herself, on the ground that her husband is

[1] Tempesti, *Vita di Sisto V* (1754), I. 4. 37. A little too much stress has however been laid on this by Stoll, as a vital clue; I have found the phrase used as a mere tag in private letters of Webster's day (see Commentary on *W.D.* II. 1. 265).

dead, may remind us of her real attempt to pistol herself at Salò when Bracciano died. Lodovico's turning pirate, so gratuitously introduced in the play, is doubtless based on his actual career as bandit; and his passion for Brachiano's Duchess is perhaps a last relic of the fatal amours of the historical Isabella, especially with Troilo, another of the house of Orsini; or of the tradition sometimes found, in de Rosset for instance, that Lodovico was in love with Vittoria. Zanche is much more certainly a *remaniement* of the Greek sorceress put to death with Marcello at Ancona, perhaps combined with Caterina of Bologna, Vittoria's servant; though Webster is dramatically right in making Brachiano's passion due, not to her philtres, but to Vittoria's fascination alone. Paul IV's excommunication may be paralleled with the Papal thunders mentioned as ready to be launched in the *Avvisi* of Nov. 26th 1585. And in the last scene of all, unhistorical as it mainly is, Flamineo's "Are you at your prayers?" and the "Do you know us?" of the disguised Lodovico (see on v. 6. 173) are possibly reminiscent of the real Eve of Sta Vittoria; while the final "Shoot! shoot!" of the English Ambassador, when Lodovico is trapped, may even be a last faint echo of that bombardment which rattled the windows of Padua on Christmas Day. It is also possible, though fanciful, to associate the coupling together of Giovanni and the English Ambassador with the interesting fact that Virginio Orsini was actually in England in 1601, himself an Ambassador from Francesco's successor on the throne of Tuscany, the sometime Cardinal de' Medici. (Stoll, p. 87: *Cal. State Papers* (*Venet.*), 1592–1603, Art. 982; and 1603–7, Art. 154[1].) Finally III. 2. 243–4—"You were borne in Venice, honourably descended, From the *Vitelli*"—recalls the name of that Vincenzo Vitelli who was assassinated by Lodovico;

[1] See also *Letters of J. Chamberlain* (Camden Society: 1861), p. 99. He had accompanied his cousin, Marie de' Medici, into France. He was greeted by Lord Burleigh and Gray's Inn prepared a show for him; while the Queen "to shew that she is not so old as some wold have her" danced galliards in his presence.

It is another curious coincidence, that a great-nephew of Cardinal Montalto (Sixtus V) and nephew of Vittoria's husband was in England, incognito, in the summer after the play was acted. Cf. Birch, *Life of Prince Henry* (1760), p. 286: *Cal. State Papers* (*Dom.*), Chamberlain to Carleton, Aug. 11th 1612.

Such things show how extremely likely it was that the story of Vittoria should reach Webster in the form of gossip about distinguished foreigners.

a connection helped perhaps by a confusion of Vittoria with her sister-adventuress, Bianca Duchess of Florence, who was in fact "born in Venice, honourably descended from the *Cap*elli". For, in any case, there is reason to suppose that some features of the rise of Bianca Capello (dramatized in Middleton's *Women beware Women*) were present also, as Stoll and Vaughan suggest, in Webster's mind. It was she, not Vittoria, who could with some appropriateness be called "the famous Venetian Curtizan"; for she was in origin a well-born Venetian girl who eloped with a certain Buonaventuri to Florence; there became, first, mistress, then Duchess, of Francesco de' Medici, who had her husband, though complaisant, assassinated; and in the end perished within a few days of the Duke, supposedly, as we have said, by her own poison.

Such are the main differences and likenesses between Webster's story and the events of 1581–5. The differences are obvious; how far are they due to ignorance, how far to dramatic intention? Certain of the alterations have a definite appearance of design. Thus the goodness, in the play, of Brachiano's wife and Vittoria's mother can be explained as providing a foil to the brilliant unscrupulousness of the two lovers. The post-dating of Isabella's murder so that it becomes a direct result of Brachiano's passion for Vittoria, and likewise the running together of the deaths of hero and heroine, are certainly a dramatic gain. And as for the fate of Lodovico, Webster may well have felt that he could not find room for a regular siege to begin at the end of Act v, Scene 6.

Other divergences are less clearly purposeful. It is, of course, not difficult to discover significance in such changes; it is much less easy to be sure that one is not inventing it. Rupert Brooke *may*, for instance, be right in suggesting that Webster purposely transposed the names of "Marcello" and "Flamineo", because the first has an essentially virtuous sound about it, the second something sinister. There is less doubt about the fitness of the change from the wicked "Tarquinia" to the good "Cornelia"; and "Montalto" is certainly far less sonorous than the Roman dignity of "Monticelso"—"Monticelso, *Nemo me Impune lacessit!*" Again, to call Francesco Peretti by his right Christian name might have meant confusion with Francesco de' Medici—though Webster could quite easily have called the latter always,

instead of only sometimes, "Florence". But why change the monumental Sixtus V, well known in England as the Pope of the Armada, to Paul IV? Because the reigning Pope in 1612 was Paul V? Why change Virginio to Giovanni? Because Virginio Orsini was still alive? How thin a disguise!

It is easy to multiply such reasons—or excuses; but the uncertainty grows. My general impression is that Webster's information was circumstantial, but imperfect (whether in the telling or in his recollection of it) in a way that suggests an oral rather than a written source. No Italian could possibly have confused Paul IV and the great Sixtus; but an English traveller might—or Webster, with his informant no longer at his elbow. Similarly several of the other small departures from the truth suggest forgetfulness rather than design. Altogether Webster has altered the story very considerably; in some points he may well have been consciously improving it; yet where we can watch him at work on a known written source, as in *The Duchess of Malfi* or *Appius and Virginia*, we find, I think, that though he adds a good deal, he alters comparatively little—far less than here. If I had to make a guess, I should suggest that Webster picked up the story by hearsay, very fully, but not very accurately; perhaps when Virginio Orsini was in England in 1601, at the beginning of his dramatic career.

In any case the exact channel of information is of minor importance; and the best summary of such a discussion is Dr Johnson's observation on Milton and *Paradise Lost*—"whence he drew the original design has been variously conjectured by men who cannot bear to think themselves ignorant of that which, at last, neither diligence nor sagacity can discover".

THE PLAY

"We went to the theatre, but coming late and sitting in an ill place, I never had so little pleasure in a play in my life, yet it was the first time that I ever saw it—*Victoria Corombona*. Methinks a very poor play."

SAMUEL PEPYS, Oct. 2nd 1661.

"It is difficult to see in Vittoria Corombona anything beyond the 'vamp' of the American film."

JAMES AGATE, Oct. 18th 1925.

Webster's plot, as we have seen, wanders far from the actual facts; but his play strikes us as far truer to the atmosphere and colour of Renaissance Italy than his contemporaries generally troubled to be. In *The White Devil*, and to a slighter extent in *The Duchess of Malfi*, we have really crossed the Alps; we move in the Amalfi of the House of Aragon, the Rome of Gregory; whereas in *Volpone* or *The Jew of Malta* or *Women beware Women* we seem to have one foot in England still.

Vernon Lee, indeed, has argued in an interesting essay[1], that all the Italian tragedies of the Elizabethans without exception are travesties of the truth, because there was not really anything tragic in cinquecento Italy. It is in the Italian comedies of the Elizabethans, she urges, that we shall find the only true picture of that land of sunny frivolity and graceful vice, troubled by no heart-searchings and soured by no sense of sin, the country of Ariosto and Bandello, of Titian and the serene Raphael. "The nation which was chaste and true wrote tales of incest and treachery, while the nation which was foul and false wrote poetry of shepherds and knights-errant." Nothing tragic appears in "the serene and spotless art" of Italian painting before the Bolognese painters in the seventeenth century, nor in Italian drama till Alfieri in the eighteenth. In short, the Italy of *The White Devil*, or *The Cenci*, is for her a nightmare that never existed[2].

This surely is an extraordinary confusion of the issue. Webster

[1] Vernon Lee, *Euphorion*, 1884, vol. I: "The Italy of Elizabethan Dramatists".

[2] Contrast Stendhal (*Racine et Shakespeare*): "Les Regnard ont besoin d'insouciance; c'est pour cela qu'il n'y a guère de comédies en Italie, le pays de l'amour et de la haine". This, I must confess, seems an exaggeration in the opposite direction.

and his fellows were concerned to render the tragic element not in the literature, but in the life of Italy. That Italians did not write tragedies does not prove that they did not live them. They had, it may be, slight sense of sin; but had they no sense of pain? Was the dust of death less bitter on their lips because in life they laughed? Surely the story of the historical Vittoria as already told is answer enough to this. "But their art is so light-hearted, they cannot have felt their tragedies." So the songs were light-hearted that drawn faces crowded to hear in the music-halls of London ten years since, in their few moments' respite from the trenches of the Somme. So in Imperial Rome under the shadow of the Caesars men wrote likewise of shepherds and knights-errant: yet we do not regard the Rome of Nero and Domitian as a blithe Arcadia, because Calpurnius Siculus or Statius sang of kine at pasture or the wars of ancient Thebes. This riddling contrast between the life and the literature of Elizabethan Italy was indeed already noted in its own day by Fynes Moryson; and Fynes Moryson adds the true answer:

"Their plays were of amorous matters, never of histories, much less of tragedies, which the Italian nature too much affects to imitate and surpass" (that is, to surpass them in real life).

This question of the reality of Webster's Italy is not merely irrelevant in dealing with his Italian plays. Drama is indeed more than life's mirror; yet it fails, if it seems to the hearer improbable, unconvincing, unreal. If it does seem so, however, it is not necessarily the poet's fault. Again and again critics have cried out at characters like Flamineo or Francisco or Ferdinand with the refrain of Judge Brack—"But people do not do such things". And to that the only answer is "They did"; and the only remedy, to read the history of the time. Thus alone shall we understand where Webster found his world, how he and his audience were fascinated by the spell of the South and its forbidden beauty, as if they too had heard the cry of the Ballad of the Demon Lover—

> I'll show where the white lilies grow,
> On the banks o' Italie.

The lilies were festered now; they grew with their roots about a skull; but their rank loveliness still enchanted. Here was a land, the most beautiful, the most cultured, the most corrupt in

Christendom; a "devil in crystal", a beautiful horror, a Medusa of the South that froze in the vision of the North images outlasting stone. And those who to-day find fantastic in Webster the cruelty of Flamineo or a Brachiano's ravings, should open here and there the solid pages of Gregorovius and read the things Renaissance Italy found credible—how the successor of the fisherman of Galilee fished the bed of the Tiber for the corpse of one son slain by another; or how, as Alexander VI himself lay dying through the hot nights of a Roman August, the figure of an ape leapt from the hangings of the room, while the old man screamed, "Leave it! It is the Fiend"; or how a black dog trotted noiselessly up and down in the gloom of the aisles of St Peter's through the last hours when the Pope's soul passed away. We live to-day in a less imaginative age; it is a reason, doubtless, for feeling thankful; but I do not see that it is a reason for finding fault with Webster as unreal.

This once brilliant world, then, which had put on darkness and fallen "into the part of weeds and outworn faces", was chosen by Webster for his stage. He took one of its most typical tragedies; and he treated it with a logic and simplicity in its main development, which the play's too abundant detail should not entirely obscure. For the plot of *The White Devil* is not as complex and confused as it is common to pretend. On this point I may perhaps be allowed to repeat here what I have written elsewhere.

"The play tells how a great Lord of Italy fell in love with the wife of a Cardinal's nephew. Her brother became their pander; from their adultery followed the murders of the wife of one, of the husband and younger brother of the other; and, last of all, from those three murders death came to the three murderers in their turn. Now, if a dramatist chooses such characters for a play, it becomes one of his first and most difficult problems how to secure for them the sympathy of his audience. They may be bad; but when they come to their bad end, we must feel that it is tragic, not a good riddance. It is the problem Shakespeare faced and solved in *Macbeth*. And so Webster had solved it here, could plays be fool-proof. How were we to be made to care what became of these beings who felt no shame and knew no pity and kept no faith? How was Milton in like case to make us care for the Devil himself? By making their characters

magnificent amid, and in spite of, the guilt that brings their ruin. Vittoria wins us because with all the clay of her cunning and her heartlessness Webster has mixed such a power of beauty and intellect, of pride and passion and indomitable will, that we forget the blood on her hands and the wrongs of the kindly Isabella; and when in the trial-scene she stands at bay against both worlds, against the power of State and Church, of Florence and Rome, we cry 'Not guilty', despite ourselves and the truth. But Webster did not rely, to gain this sympathy, on the qualities of his heroine alone. Instead of showing us her lover as he was in history, so fat that he had a dispensation about kneeling in the Papal presence, he gilded with the brightest gold of his poetry, the splendid figure of Paolo Giordano Orsini, Duke of Brachiano; that her sin might be palliated by the greatness of the temptation, as Vittoria's splendour palliated his. We have to picture some prince of the Italian Renaissance, a ruthless but successful soldier and statesman, riding through life as proudly as Bartolommeo Colleoni rides through Venice still. Yet not even this was enough. As further excuse, Webster made Vittoria's husband, not the good-hearted youth he seems really to have been, but a cold, callous, heartless, witless pedant, a Renaissance Dr Casaubon, prating of alchemy and adages. Here, then, were two great figures and a great temptation; it only remained to find a devil. Webster took the Machiavelli of popular imagination and made him Flamineo. And yet, lest even he and his black familiar Zanche should lack our pity at the last, to Flamineo he gave a devil's wit, and to both that unwincing courage, that gift of dying game, which in his eyes covered so many sins. For always Webster had meant that we should shudder with pity, even while we felt the justice, when amid a storm of poetry his characters fall before us, like the star of the Son of the Morning from heaven, bright and bitter and baleful to the end."

Now Aristotle would certainly have condemned Webster's plot as too full of episodes; and he would have been right. But he would surely have approved the inevitableness of the main course of events, the sure fatality with which the characters reap the fruit of their own deeds. The life they live before us is, in Donne's phrase of human existence, "but a going out to the place of execution". Act I shows the temptation; Act II, the crime. The rest of the play is the retribution, foiled at first

in Act III, finally accomplished in Acts IV and V. Aristotle, again, with the moral prepossession of all ancient criticism, would doubtless have complained that the characters were too wicked for his ideal of tragedy. Certainly, apart from the minor figures of Cornelia, Marcello and Giovanni, there is little virtue distributed among all the persons of the play. And yet here, I think, we should feel that Aristotle himself was wrong. What matters in a play is that its people should keep a certain minimum, not of the Ten Commandments, but of our sympathy. We must care what becomes of them, or the tragedy leaves us cold; and surely we care here. If Vittoria were mean, and Brachiano cowardly, and Flamineo a fool, then we might turn away. Brachiano indeed we do not love nor even much admire, except for the splendour that surrounds him, of a great prince in a magnificent world. He has neither goodness nor real greatness; yet if he sins, he at least sins with no faint half-heartedness. This man who is wax in the hands of Vittoria, remains steel to all the world beside. If his tongue speaks little good, there is at least no splendour of eloquence it does not possess. And in the trial-scene, at the moment of his supreme defiance of the power of Rome, all the rebel sympathies of the human heart rise up and triumph with him in his parting cry:

> Monticelso,
> *Nemo me Impune lacessit!*

In the intensely human quarrel that follows between Brachiano and his mistress in the House of Convertites this momentary impression of greatness disappears; and it is only in his death-scene that the poisoned Orsini reaches his highest splendour the moment before his reason goes. And here there comes to light a trait unmarked before in this ruthless self-seeker, who had held men's lives cheaper than cannon-balls—a sudden regard for others, for the child he has remembered too little, for the woman he has remembered only too much.

> Remove the boy away,
> Where's this good woman? had I infinite worlds
> They were too little for thee...
> Do not kisse me, for I shall poyson thee.
> This unction is sent from the great Duke of Florence.

"This *good* woman"—the strangest, surely, of all the epithets his tongue could have found. Yet in that moment of horror we

have not the heart to question it; in the death-throes of this magnificent animal, the breaking of this strong heart that had so fast a covenant with the world, and with flesh and devil also, we forget his sins and hers, the treachery, the callousness, the avarice, the hypocrisy, the meanness at moments, which had stained him. He came before us a doomed figure—"Quite lost!" almost the first words he uttered, more truly than he knew. But we did not expect to care like this, as that last great cry "Vittoria! Vittoria!" is choked by the strangling cord.

As with Antony and Cleopatra, we feel that if for these two their world was not well lost, yet it is not we who shall condemn; that few virtues are as moving as the courage and devotion of these lovers, who have been so ruthless and guilty in all else. Had they repented, we should hardly have forgiven them. And if we feel this of Brachiano, we feel it doubly of Vittoria—and that Webster was right, whether or no he had heard of the saintly conversion of the real Accoramboni, to keep his own heroine defiant to the last. I own that I regret, each time I read them, even the few words of conventional repentance he has left her, though they alter little in the total effect. We do not want Cleopatra or Clytemnestra to don sackcloth before us; our human pride would suffer with the breaking of theirs. Charles Lamb spoke, too heedlessly, of Vittoria's "innocence-resembling boldness"; and we cannot but retort with Swinburne's cry to Mary of Scotland,

> "Surely you were something better
> Than innocent!"

Indeed Vittoria exerts something of the same spell as Mary Stuart[1]. It is extraordinary how vivid she becomes in the comparatively few words that she speaks. Cleopatra was as brilliant, but less queenly; Lady Macbeth as resolute, but not so moving —who could fall in love with Lady Macbeth? Very skilfully Vittoria is not revealed at once in her full stature; her character grows and hardens before our eyes. At her first appearance she has only half broken her girlhood's chains; she has lost its innocence, but not as yet its timidity; she is sly with Brachiano,

[1] The general resemblance between the tragedy of Vittoria, Camillo, and Brachiano, and that of Mary, Darnley, and Bothwell, may well have struck some of Webster's hearers. It was, as it happens, only a year after Vittoria's death that Mary Stuart went to the block at Fotheringay (Feb. 8th 1587).

led on by her brother, cowed by her mother's curse. Then for a whole act she disappears: and only with her arraignment and condemnation is revealed that high spirit in her which neither Duke nor Cardinal, nor the jealous fury of Brachiano, nor the cold cruelty of her brother, nor death itself can tame.

It is worth passing notice in this trial-scene how Webster, on the romantic principle of "every man in his humour down to the fourth citizen", makes his English Ambassador react to her behaviour in a way most typically English, in the space of two brief remarks. "Shee hath lived ill", says the French Ambassador, and at once with characteristic sympathy for the weaker side, our Envoy answers, "Trew, but the Cardinals too bitter". And then once more, with the English fondness for a brave fight against odds—"Shee hath a brave spirit". At such moments an Elizabethan playwright shows his hand and his own feelings; that is the comment Webster's audience was meant to make.

Again, in each of the three last acts we may watch how Vittoria is faced with harder and harder trials. In the third act her liberty, but in the fourth her love, in the fifth her life is at stake; yet she never quails. Such courage might grow monotonous by itself. Wooden soldiers are too easily fashioned; and we should weary of an Amazon. But in Vittoria there live also her fascination, her vitality, her wit. Nothing finds her at a loss. "Your Champions gon", cries, with a dark smile, the already triumphing Cardinal, as Brachiano leaves the Court; and swift her answer comes—"The wolfe may prey the better". Then, when even her lover in his jealous folly turns upon her in the House of Convertites, she meets his blind anger with an anger that sees only the more keenly how to sting his weakness, his forgetfulness of where they stand:

> What doe you call this house?
> Is this your palace? did not the Judge stile it
> A house of penitent whores? who sent mee to it?
> Who hath the honour to advance *Vittoria*
> To this incontinent colledge? is't not you?
> Is't not your high preferment?

Her lord is poisoned; the love and the greatness she had fought and sinned and suffered for, crumble to dust in the crowning moment of her triumph; and for an instant, there in the pomp of Padua, she breaks down with the cry, "This place is Hell".

And yet when a few hours later Flamineo comes to blackmail her—a foe, this time, whom her physical attraction has no power to charm—she is once more her brilliant, bitter self, as she flings him in scornful answer the reward of the fratricidal Cain. Even when Lodovico and his cut-throats have broken in upon her, like Cleopatra in the power of Octavian, she realizes that her beauty may save her yet, could she but see the Duke of Florence face to face. That forlorn hope fails; but at least she has played her game faultlessly, has missed no chance to the end. Whatever her crimes, here is no Dubarry who dies crying: "Monsieur le bourreau, encore un instant!" And the voice of Webster is heard again in Flamineo's dying praise of her, which is indeed her funeral speech:

> Th'art a noble sister,
> I love thee now; if woeman doe breed man,
> Shee ought to teach him manhood: Fare thee well.
> Know many glorious woemen that are fam'd
> For masculine vertue, have bin vitious,
> Onely a happier silence did betyde them.

Flamineo himself not even a sister could call "glorious" or "noble". He embodies the cold clear intellect of the South as seen by Northern eyes, just as Vittoria on her side is the incarnation of its burning beauty and its haunting call. Machiavelli and Lucrezia Borgia—such were the two types that to the Elizabethan imagination above all represented Italy. And Flamineo, belonging to the first of these, recalls at once the greatest of his fellows, Iago. Yet the difference between the two figures needs no stressing. No man would have spoken in Rome or Padua of "honest Flamineo"; the truth being precisely that Flamineo is really an honester character, in essentials, than Iago whom men called "honest", than Bosola who calls himself so. But both Webster's villain and Shakespeare's have this in common, that in each of them breathes the understanding and the delight of his creator. Without that they might so easily have lapsed into puppet devils. Thus Webster has given his creature not only the essential courage, but also that shrewd disillusion and freedom from all cant which Webster himself clearly loved to find in men. As Flamineo's cynicism strips with withering impartiality the fair appearances from life, one seems to see over his shoulder Webster's own bitter smile. Flamineo

indeed is a very consistent and reasonable monster, well fortified, the toad within the stone. He has no finer feelings; why behave as if he had? If he is by nature

> minded like the asp,
> That strikes whatever is not dust,

he but does his kind. Once only, at the sight of his mother's crazed babblings above the body of the brother he has killed, he feels for an instant the touch of some strange emotion: which, judging by descriptions, he conjectures to be pity. But it is only a passing twinge, nothing deeper. For we can hardly believe that it is more than the outcry of a wounded moment, when he speaks of a maze of conscience in his breast as having haunted all his life in princes' courts. He forgets it quickly enough. He is no Bosola, hesitating at every turning in the path of crime, and converted when it is too late by pity for the victim he has tortured to death. Flamineo is a far gayer soul; and, being less unhappy, less ready to change his heart and repent. He laughs, as Bosola seldom does. Nor can we imagine Bosola crying, with that half-mocking, half-genuine enthusiasm for a fellow-artist in villainy —"Let me embrace thee, toad"; or, with humour at his own expense, likening himself in his entanglement with Zanche to a ridiculous dog fleeing from the bottle at its tail. Flamineo is the worse, but the more engaging character. And it is curious to find ourselves watching the murder of this scoundrel by scoundrels of half his brains and wit, with a pity and half-regret that the weaker Bosola does not inspire to nearly the same extent, and the loathsome Iago not at all.

> 'Tis well yet there's some goodnesse in my death,
> My life was a blacke charnell: I have caught
> An everlasting could. I have lost my voice
> Most irrecoverably: Farewell glorious villaines,
> "This busie trade of life appeares most vaine,
> "Since rest breeds rest, where all seeke paine by paine.

These are the three characters that matter—Vittoria, her lover, and Flamineo. The others are mainly what the story requires them to be—ruined wife, heartbroken mother, and the rest. But a word should perhaps be said in defence of one of the few charming children of the Elizabethan stage. With the strictures passed on Shakespeare's children by Mr Kellett in his *Suggestions* it is difficult not to agree; but when Dr Stoll lays

hands on Giovanni, it is really time to protest. Dr Stoll objects to children like Giovanni and Hengo in *Bonduca* as "pert and sophisticated" and "drooping and effeminate", as "weak-eyed girls" and "a beautiful sickly outgrowth from the self-conscious innocence of Arthur and Lucius". Now it is ridiculous, to begin with, to class together Giovanni and the tiresome Hengo, who may be sacrificed to critical Molochs without a tear of regret. It is clear, again, that the Elizabethans were fonder than we are of finding children pert and precocious and grown up before their time. "See a good habit makes the child a man", says Francisco, as if that were the ideal. For him and his age it was. But when we have allowed for this difference—and one may be quite amused, in spite of it, by Giovanni's wit, as by the little Macduff's in *Macbeth*—surely the scene between Giovanni and his uncle in Act III should, if it does not, leave criticism dumb. It is indeed a thing beyond the power of critics or even of actors to spoil in its perfect simplicity, or if you will, *simplesse*.

Such is the play. Life had provided Webster with a magnificent tragedy. And he succeeded greatly in transferring it to the stage. His plot is indeed too intricate and full of episodes; things like the Papal Election are blind-alleys—hung with banners, but still blind-alleys. Yet it remains not an unworthy framework for his characters and his poetry. That is no mean praise. And the characters, for their part, have a vividness of colouring that makes it easy to accept the plot. Webster was never to be so great again, I think, as in this play, his first unaided effort left to us. Indeed I do not know what other Elizabethan could have produced it except Shakespeare; and in Shakespeare's hands it would have been better, perhaps, yet not the same. For it is the product of a temper harsher and more embittered than (except perhaps in one phase of his career) the "gentle" Shakespeare was. It is a tiger beside his lion; less noble, yet magnificent. Massinger on the other hand, though he would have bettered the plot, could not have given us the poetry; nor Jonson either. And the rest of the Jacobeans are cast in a smaller mould.

It is, I know, customary to prefer *The Duchess of Malfi*: mainly for the ridiculous, but typically English reason, that its hero and heroine are more worthy of our moral approbation. As if that mattered! Nothing can make the passive fortitude of the Duchess as dramatic as the active courage of Vittoria. And the last Act of *The Duchess of Malfi* is sadly marred by the

fatuities too common towards the close of Webster's later plays, such as the episode where the Cardinal locks himself in to be murdered; and even apart from that, with the Duchess's death in Act IV the main interest of its plot is gone. Yet if this preference for *The White Devil* is the view of a minority, those who hold it will find themselves in no bad company. Hazlitt has written: "*The Duchess of Malfy* is not, in my judgment, quite so spirited or effectual a performance as *The White Devil*"; and after him, with no uncertain voice, follows the verdict of Professor Saintsbury: "I have said that in my judgment *The White Devil* is the better of the two; I should add that it seems to me very far the better"[1]. Indeed the closing words of the doomed Lodovico may well seem prophetically true of his creator's own career—

I limb'd this night-peece and it was my best.

[1] It is perhaps worth quoting also a solitary outburst of seventeenth-century enthusiasm for the play—the epigram of S. Sheppard, a pamphleteer and poet, who also pays Webster the tribute of liberal borrowing from his works.

On Mr. Websters *most excellent Tragedy, called the White Devill.*

Wee will no more admire *Euripides*,
Nor praise the Tragick streines of *Sophocles*,
For why? thou in this Tragedie hast fram'd
All reall worth, that can in them be nam'd:
How lively are thy persons fitted, and
How pretty are thy lines!—thy Verses stand
Like unto pretious Jewels set in gold,
And grace thy fluent Prose; I once was told
By one well skil'd in Arts, he thought thy Play
Was onely worthy Fame to beare away
From all before it—*Brachianos* Ill,
Murthering his Dutchesse, hath by thy rare skill
Made him renown'd, *Flamineo*['s] such another,
The Devils darling, Murtherer of his brother:
His part—most strange!—*(given him to Act by thee)
Doth gaine him Credit, and not Calumnie:
Vittoria Corombona, that fam'd Whore,
Desp'rate Lodovico weltring in his gore,
Subtile Francisco—all of them shall bee
Gaz'd at as Comets by Posteritie:
And thou meane time with never withering Bayes
Shalt Crowned bee by all that read thy Layes.

Epigrams theological, philosophical, and romantic (1651), v. 27.

* "His part most strange" in the original and in Dyce.

It is interesting that by 1672 *The White Devil* had been four times printed, *The Duchess of Malfi* only twice; it is since then that the more pathetic Duchess seems to have outstripped her rival.

THE WHITE DIVEL

THE WHITE DIVEL,

OR,

The Tragedy of *Paulo Giordano Urſini*, Duke of *Brachiano*,

With

The Life and Death of Vittoria Corombona the famous Venetian Curtizan.

Acted by the Queenes Maieſties Servants.

Written by IOHN WEBSTER.

Non inferiora ſecutus.

LONDON,
Printed by *N.O.* for *Thomas Archer*, and are to be ſold at his Shop in Popes head Pallace, neere the Royall Exchange. 1612.

To the Reader.

IN *publishing this Tragedy, I do but challenge to my selfe that liberty, which other men have tane before mee; not that I affect praise by it, for,* nos hæc novimus esse nihil, *onely since it was acted in so dull a time of Winter, presented in so open and blacke a Theater, that it wanted (that which is the onely grace and setting out of a Tragedy) a full and understanding Auditory: and that since that time I have noted, most of the people that come to that Play-house, resemble those ignorant asses (who visiting Stationers shoppes their use is not to inquire for good bookes, but new bookes) I present it to the generall veiw with this confidence.*

Nec Rhoncos metues, maligniorum,
Nec Scombris tunicas, dabis molestas.

If it be objected this is no true Drammaticke Poem, I shall easily confesse it, non potes in nugas dicere plura meas: Ipse ego quam dixi, *willingly, and not ignorantly, in this kind have I faulted: for should a man present to such an Auditory, the most sententious Tragedy that ever was written, observing all the critticall lawes, as heighth of stile; and gravety of person; inrich it with the sententious* Chorus, *and as it were life'n Death, in the passionate and waighty* Nuntius*: yet after all this divine rapture,* O dura messorum ilia, *the breath that comes from the uncapable multitude, is able to poison it, and ere it be acted, let the Author resolve to fix to every scœne, this of* Horace,

—Hæc hodie Porcis comedenda relinques.

To those who report I was a long time in finishing this Tragedy, I confesse I do not write with a goose-quill, winged with two feathers, and if they will needes make it my fault, I must answere them with that of Eurypides *to* Alcestides, *a Tragicke Writer:* Alcestides *objecting that* Eurypides *had onely in three daies composed three verses, whereas himselfe had written three hundreth: Thou telst truth, (quoth he) but heres the difference, thine shall onely bee read for three daies, whereas mine shall continue three ages.*

Detraction is the sworne friend to ignorance: For mine owne part I have ever truly cherisht my good opinion of other mens worthy

Labours, especially of that full and haightned stile of Maister Chapman: *The labor'd and understanding workes of Maister* Johnson: *The no lesse worthy composures of the both worthily excellent Maister* Beamont, *&* *Maister* Fletcher: *And lastly* (*without wrong last to be named*) *the right happy and copious industry of M.* Shake-speare, *M.* Decker, *&* *M.* Heywood, *wishing what I write may be read by their light: Protesting, that, in the strength of mine owne judgement, I know them so worthy, that though I rest silent in my owne worke, yet to most of theirs I dare* (*without flattery*) *fix that of* Martiall.

—non norunt, Hæc monumenta mori.

[The Persons.

MONTICELSO.—*A Cardinal; Afterwards,* Pope Paul *the fourth.*

FRANCISCO *de* MEDICIS. } *Duke of* Florence; *in the fifth Act disguis'd for a* Moore, *under the name of* Mulinassar.

BRACHIANO.—*Otherwise* Paulo Giordano Ursini, *Duke of* Brachiano; *Husband to* Isabella, *and in love with* Vittoria.

GIOVANNI.—*His son, by* Isabella.

LODOVICO.—*An Italian Count, but decay'd.*

ANTONELLI. GASPARO. } *His Friends, and Dependants of the Duke of* Florence.

CAMILLO.—*Husband to* Vittoria.

HORTENSIO.—*One of* Brachiano's *officers.*

MARCELLO.—*An Attendant of the Duke of* Florence, *and Brother to* Vittoria.

FLAMINEO.—*His Brother; Secretary to* Brachiano.

JAQUES.—*A* Moor, *Servant to* Giovanni.

[CARDINAL OF ARRAGON.]

[DOCTOR JULIO.]

[CHRISTOPHERO, *his Assistant.*]

ISABELLA.—*Sister to* Francisco *de* Medicis, *and Wife to* Brachiano.

VITTORIA COROMBONA. } *A* Venetian *Lady; first Marry'd to* Camillo, *afterwards to* Brachiano.

CORNELIA.—*Mother to* Vittoria, Flamineo, *and* Marcello.

ZANCHE.—*A* Moor; *servant to* Vittoria.

[MATRON *of a House of convertites.*]

Embassadours.
Courtiers.
Lawyers.
Officers.

Physicians.
Conjurer.
Armourer.
Attendants.

The Scene, ITALY.]

THE TRAGEDY
OF PAULO GIORDANO
Ursini Duke of Brachiano, and Vittoria Corombona.

[ACT I. SCENE I.]

[*Rome. A Street.*]

Enter Count Lodovico, Antonelli and Gasparo.

LODOVICO.

BAnisht! ANTO. It greev'd me much to heare the sentence.
LODO. Ha, Ha, ô *Democritus* thy Gods
That governe the whole world! Courtly reward
And punishment. Fortun's a right whore.
If she give ought, she deales it in smal percels,
That she may take away all at one swope.
This tis to have great enemies, God quite them:
Your woolfe no longer seemes to be a woolfe
Then when shees hungry. GAS. You terme those enemies
Are men of Princely ranke. LOD. Oh I pray for them.
The violent thunder is adored by those
Are pasht in peeces by it. ANTO. Come my Lord,
You are justly dom'd; looke but a little backe
Into your former life: you have in three yeares
Ruin'd the noblest Earldome. GAS. Your followers
Have swallowed you like Mummia, and being sicke
With such unnaturall and horrid Phisicke
Vomit you up ith kennell. ANTO. All the damnable degrees
Of drinkings have you staggerd through—one Cittizen
Is Lord of two faire Manors cald you master,
Only for Caviare. GAS. Those noblemen
Which were invited to your prodigall feastes,
Wherin the Phœnix scarce could scape your throtes,

Laugh at your misery, as fore-deeminge you
An idle Meteor which drawne forth the earth
Would bee soone lost ith aire. ANTO. Jeast upon you,
And say you were begotten in an Earthquake,
You have ruin'd such faire Lordships. LODO. Very good,
This Well goes with two buckets, I must tend
The powring out of eather. GAS. Worse then these,
You have acted certaine Murders here in Rome,
Bloody and full of horror. LOD. 'Las they were flea-bytinges:
Why tooke they not my head then? GAS. O my Lord
The law doth somtimes mediate, thinkes it good
Not ever to steepe violent sinnes in blood,
This gentle pennance may both end your crimes,
And in the example better these bad times.
LOD. So—but I wonder then some great men scape
This banishment, ther's *Paulo Giordano Orsini*,
The Duke of *Brachiano*, now lives in Rome,
And by close pandarisme seekes to prostitute
The honour of *Vittoria Corombona*,
Vittoria, she that might have got my pardon
For one kisse to the Duke. ANTO. Have a full man within you,
Wee see that Trees beare no such pleasant fruite
There where they grew first, as where the[y] are new set.
Perfumes the more they are chaf'd the more they render
Their pleasing sents, and so affliction
Expresseth vertue, fully, whether trew,
Or ells adulterate. LOD. Leave your painted comforts,
Ile make Italian cut-works in their guts
If ever I returne. GASP. O Sir. LODO. I am patient,
I have seene some ready to be executed
Give pleasant lookes, and money, and growne familiar
With the knave hangman—so do I, I thanke them,
And would account them nobly mercifull
Would they dispatch me quicklie—ANTO. Fare you well,
Wee shall find time I doubt not to repeale
Your banishment. LOD. I am ever bound to you: *Enter*
This is the worlds almes; pray make use of it— [*Sennet*].
Great men sell sheep thus, to be cut in peeces,
When first they have shorne them bare and sold their fleeces.
Exeunt.

[SCENE II.]

[*Rome. Camillo's House.*]

Enter Brachiano, Camillo, Flamineo, Vittoria Corombona.

BRA. Your best of rest! VIT. Unto my Lord the Duke,
The best of wellcome—More lights, attend the Duke.
[*Exeunt Camillo & Vittoria.*]
BRA. *Flamineo.* FLA. My Lord. BRA. Quite lost, *Flamineo.*
FLA. Pursew your noble wishes, I am prompt
As lightning to your service, ô my Lord!
The faire *Vittoria*, my happy sister
Shall give you present audience—gentlemen (*whisper*
Let the caroach go on—and 'tis his pleasure
You put out all your torches and depart.
BRA. Are wee so happy? FLA. Can 't be otherwise?
Observ'd you not to-night my honor'd Lord
Which way so ere you went shee threw her eyes?
I have dealt already with her chamber-maid
Zanche the More, and she is wondrous proud
To be the agent for so high a spirit.
BRA. Wee are happie above thought, because 'bove merrit.
FLA. 'bove merrit! wee may now talke freely: 'bove merrit! what ist you doubt? her coynesse? thats but the superficies of lust most women have; yet why should Ladyes blush to heare that nam'd, which they do not feare to handle? O they are polliticke, They know our desire is increas'd by the difficultie of injoying; [whereas] satiety is a blunt, weary and drowsie passion—if the buttery hatch at Court stood continually open their would be nothing so passionat crouding, nor hot suit after the beverage—
BRA. O but her jealous husband.
FLA. Hang him, a guilder that hath his braynes perisht with quicke-silver is not more could in the liver. The great Barriers moulted not more feathers then he hath shed haires, by the confession of his doctor. An Irish gamster that will play himselfe naked, and then wage all downeward, at hazard, is not more venterous. So un-able to please a woman that like a dutch doublet all his backe is shrunke into his breeches.

Shrowd you within this closet, good my Lord,
Some tricke now must be thought on to devide
My brother in law from his faire bed-fellow—
BRA. O should she faile to come—
FLA. I must not have your Lordship thus unwisely amorous —I my selfe have loved a lady and peursued her with a great deale of under-age protestation, whom some 3. or 4. gallants that have enjoyed would with all their harts have bin glad to have bin rid of: Tis just like a summer bird-cage in a garden, the birds that are without, despaire to get in, and the birds that are within despaire and are in a consumption for feare they shall never get out: away away my Lord!— [*Exit Brachiano.*] *Enter Camillo.*
See here he comes, this fellow by his apparell
Some men would judge a pollititian,
But call his wit in question, you shall find it
Merely an Asse in's foot-cloath—How now brother!—
What, travailing to bed to your kind wife?
CAM. I assure you brother no. My voyage lyes
More northerlie, in a farre colder clime,
I do not well remember I protest
When I last lay with her.
FLA. Strange you should loose your Count.
CAM. Wee never lay together but eare morning
Their grew a flaw betweene us. FLA. 'T had byn your part
To have made up that flaw.
CAM. Trew, but shee loathes
I should be seene in't.
FLA. Why Sir, what's the matter?
CAM. The Duke your maister visits me—I thanke him,
And I perceave how like an earnest bowler
Hee very passionatelie leanes that way,
He should have his boule runne.
FLA. I hope you do not thinke—
CAM. That noble men boule bootie? Faith his cheeke
Hath a most excellent Bias, it would faine
Jumpe with my mistris. FLA. Will you be an asse,
Despight you[r] *Aristotle* or a Cocould
Contrary to your *Ephemerides*
Which shewes you under what a smiling planet
You were first swadled?—

CAM: Pew wew, Sir tell not me
Of planets nor of *Ephemerides*—
A man may be made Cocould in the day time
When the Stars eyes are out. FLA. Sir God boy you,
I do commit you to your pittifull pillow
Stuft with horne-shavings. CAM. Brother! FLA. God refuse me,
Might I advise you now, your onlie course
Weare to locke up your wife. CAM. 'Tweare very good.
FLA. Bar her the sight of revels. CAM. Excellent.
FLA. Let her not go to Church, but like a hounde
In Leon at your heeles. CAM. Tweare for her honour.
FLA. And so you should be certayne in one fortnight,
Despight her chastity or innocence
To bee Cocoulded, which yet is in suspence:
This is my counsell and I aske no fee for't.
CAM. Come you know not where my night-cap wringes mee.
FLA. Weare it ath' old fashion, let your large eares come through, it will be more easy—nay I will be bitter—barre your wife of her entertaynment: women are more willinglie & more gloriouslie chast, when they are least restrayned of their libertie. It seemes you would be a fine Capricious Mathematically jealous Coxcombe, take the height of your owne hornes with a *Jacobs* staffe afore they are up. These polliticke inclosures for paltry mutton, makes more rebellion in the flesh then all the provocative electuaries Doctors have uttered sence last Jubilee.
CAM. This doth not phisicke me—
FLA: It seemes you are Jealous, ile shew you the error of it by a familiar example—I have seene a paire of spectacles fashiond with such perspective art, that lay downe but one twelvepence ath' bord twill appeare as if there were twenty—now should you weare a paire of these spectacles, and see your wife tying her shooe, you would Imagine twenty hands were taking up of your wives clothes, and this would put you into a horrible causlesse fury—
CAM. The fault there Sir is not in the eye-sight.
FLA. True, but they that have the yellow Jaundeise, thinke all objects they looke on to bee yellow. Jealousy is worser, her fits present to a man, like so many bubles in a Bason of water, twenty severall crabbed faces—many times makes his

owne shadow his cocould-maker*. See she comes, what reason have you to be jealous of this creature? what an ignorant asse or flattering knave might he be counted, that should write sonnets to her eyes, or call her brow the snow of Ida, or Ivorie of Corinth, or compare her haire to the blacke birds bill, when 'tis liker the blacke birds feather. This is all: Be wise, I will make you freinds and you shall go to bed together, marry looke you, it shall not be your seeking, do you stand upon that by any meanes, walk you a loofe, I would not have you seene in't—sister (my Lord attends you in the banquetting house), your husband is wondrous discontented.

* *Enter Corombona.*

VIT. I did nothing to displease him, I carved to him at supper-time.

FLA. (You need not have carved him infaith, they say he is a capon already. I must now seemingly fall out with you.) Shall a gentleman so well descended as *Camillo*——(a lousy slave that within this twenty yeares rode with the blacke guard in the Dukes cariage mongst spits and dripping-pannes)—

CAM. Now he begins to tickle her.

FLA. An excellent scholler, (one that hath a head fild with calves braynes without any sage in them),——come crouching in the hams to you for a nights lodging?——(that hath an itch in's hams, which like the fier at the glasse house hath not gone out this seaven yeares)——is hee not a courtly gentleman?——(when he weares white sattin one would take him by his blacke mussel to be no other creature then a maggot), you are a goodly Foile, I confesse, well set out——(but coverd with a false stone, yon conterfaite dyamond).

CAM. He will make her know what is in mee.

FLA. Come, my Lord attends you, thou shalt go to bed to my Lord. CAM. Now he comes to't.

FLA. With a relish as curious as a vintner going to taste new wine—[*to Camillo*] I am opening your case hard.

CAM. A vertuous brother, a my credit.

FLA. He will give thee a ringe with a philosophers stone in it.

CAM. Indeede I am studying Alcumye.

FLA. Thou shalt lye in a bed stuft with turtles feathers, swoone in perfumed lynnen like the fellow was smothered in roses—so perfect shall be thy happinesse, that as men at Sea thinke land and trees and shippes go that way they go, so both heaven

and earth shall seeme to go your voyage. Shalt meete him, tis fixt with nayles of dyamonds to inevitable necessitie.

VITTO. (How shals rid him hence?)

FLA. (I will put brees in's tayle, set him gadding presentlie.) [*to Camillo*] I have almost wrought her to it, I find her comming, but might I advise you now, for this night I would not lye with her, I would crosse her humor to make her more humble.

CAMIL. Shall I, shall I?

FLA. It will shew in you a supremacie of Judgement.

CAMIL. Trew, and a mind differing from the tumultuary opinion, for *quae negata grata.*

FLA. Right, you are the Adamant shall draw her to you, though you keepe distance of[f].

CAMIL. A philosophicall reason.

FLA. Walke by her a'the noble mans fashion, and tell her you will lye with her at the end of the Progresse.

CAMIL. *Vittoria,* I cannot be induc'd, or as a man would say incited—VITTO. To do what Sir?

CAMIL. To lye with you to-night; your silkeworme useth to fast every third day, and the next following spinnes the better. Tomorrow at night I am for you.

VITTO. Youle spinne a faire thread, trust to't.

FLA. But do you heare, I shall have you steale to her chamber about midnight.

CAMIL. Do you thinke so?—why looke you brother, because you shall not thinke ile gull you, take the key, locke me into the chamber, and say you shall be sure of me. [*Gives key.*]

FLA. Introth I will, ile be your jaylor once,
But have you nere a false dore?

CAM. A pox on't, as I am a Christian—tell mee to-morrow how scurvelie shee takes my unkind parting.

FLA. I will. CAM. Didst thou not ma[r]ke the jeast of the silke-worme? good night; in faith I will use this tricke often—

FLA. Do, do, do. *Exit Camillo.*
So now you are safe. Ha ha ha, thou intanglest thy selfe in thine owne worke like a silke-worme. *Enter Brachiano.*
Come sister, darkenesse hides your blush, women are like curst dogges, civilitie keepes them tyed all day time, but they are let loose at midnight, then they do most good or most mischeefe— my Lord, my Lord!

BRA. Give credit: I could wish time would stand still
And never end this entervew, this hower, *Zanche brings out a Car-*
But all delight doth it selfe soon'st devour. *pet. Spreads it and layes*
Let me into your bosome happy Ladie, *on it two faire Cushions.*
Powre out in stead of eloquence my vowes— *Enter Cornelia*
Loose me not Madam, for if you forego me [*listening*].
I am lost eternallie. VIT. Sir in the way of pittie
I wish you hart-hole. BRA. You are a sweet Phisition.
VIT. Sure Sir a loathed crueltie in Ladyes
Is as to Doctors many funeralls:
It takes away their credit. BRA. Excellent Creature.
Wee call the cruell fayre, what name for you
That are so mercifull? ZAN. See now they close.
FLA. Most happie union.
COR. [*aside*] My feares are falne upon me, oh my heart!
My sonne the pandar: now I find our house
Sinking to ruine. Earth-quakes leave behind,
Where they have tyrannised, iron, or lead, or stone,
But woe to ruine, violent lust leaves none.
BRA. What valew is this Jewell? VIT. Tis the ornament
Of a weake fortune.
BRA. In sooth ile have it; nay I will but change
My Jewell for your Jewell. FLAM. Excellent,
His Jewell for her Jewell, well put in Duke.
BRAC. Nay let me see you weare it. VIT. [Here] sir?
BRAC. Nay lower, you shall weare my Jewell lower.
FLAM. That's better, she must weare his Jewell lower.
VIT. To passe away the time I'le tell your grace,
A dreame I had last night. BRAC. Most wishedly.
VIT. A foolish idle dreame,
Methought I walkt about the mid of night,
Into a Church-yard, where a goodly *Eu* Tree
Spred her large roote in ground—under that *Eu*,
As I sat sadly leaning on a grave,
Checkered with crosse-sticks, their came stealing in
Your Dutchesse and my husband—one of them
A picax bore, th'other a Rusty spade,
And in rough termes they gan to challenge me,
About this *Eu*. BRAC. That Tree?
VIT. This harmelesse *Eu*.

They told me my entent was to root up
That well-growne *Eu*, and plant i'th steed of it
A withered blacke-thorne, and for that they vow'd
To bury me alive: my husband straight
With picax gan to dig, and your fell Dutchesse
With shovell, like a fury, voyded out
The earth & scattered bones—Lord how me thought
I trembled, and yet for all this terror
I could not pray. FLAM. No the divell was in your dreame.
VIT. When to my rescue there arose me thought
A whirlewind, which let fall a massy arme
From that strong plant,
And both were strucke dead by that sacred *Eu*
In that base shallow grave that was their due.
FLAM. Excellent Divell.
Shee hath taught him in a dreame
To make away his Dutchesse and her husband.
BRAC. Sweetly shall I enterpret this your dreame,
You are lodged within his armes who shall protect you,
From all the feavers of a jealous husband,
From the poore envy of our flegmaticke Dutchesse—
I'le seate you above law and above scandall,
Give to your thoughts the invention of delight
And the fruition; nor shall government
Divide me from you longer then a care
To keepe you great: you shall to me at once,
Be Dukedome, health, wife, children, friends and all.
COR. Woe to light hearts!—they still forerun our fall!
FLAM. What fury rais'd thee up? away, away! *Exit Zanche.*
COR. What make you [here] my Lord this dead of night?
Never dropt meldew on a flower here, tell now.
FLAM. I pray will you go to bed then,
Least you be blasted? COR. O that this faire garden,
Had [with] all poysoned hearbes of *Thessaly*,
At first bene planted, made a nursery
For witch-craft; rather [then] a buriall plot,
For both your Honours. VIT. Dearest mother heare me.
COR. O thou dost make my brow bend to the earth,
Sooner then nature—see the curse of children!
In life they keepe us fre[qu]ently in teares,

And in the cold grave [leave] us in pale feares.
BRAC. Come, come, I will not heare you.
VIT. Deere my Lord.
COR. Where is thy Dutchesse now, adulterous Duke?
Thou little dreamd'st this night shee is come to *Rome*.
FLAM. How? come to *Rome*— VIT. The Dutchesse—
BRAC. She had bene better—
COR. The lives of Princes should like dyals move,
Whose regular example is so strong,
They make the times by them go right or wrong.
FLAM. So, have you done? COR. Unfortunate *Camillo*!
VIT. I do protest if any chast deniall,
If any thing but bloud could have alayed
His long suite to me...
COR. I will joyne with thee,
To the most wofull end [e'er] mother kneel'd—
If thou dishonour thus thy husbands bed,
Bee thy life short as are the funerall teares
In great mens...BRAC. Fye, fye, the woman's mad.
COR. Bee thy act *Judas-like*, betray in kissing—
Maiest thou be envied during his short breath,
And pittied like a wretch after [his] death.
VIT. O me accurst! *Exit Vittoria.*
FLAM. Are you out of your wits, my Lord?
Ile fetch her backe againe. BRAC. No I'le to bed.
Send Doctor *Julio* to me presently—
Uncharitable woman, thy rash tongue
Hath rais'd a fearefull and prodigious storme,
Bee thou the cause of all ensuing harme. *Exit Brachiano.*
FLAM. Now, you that stand so much upon your honour,
Is this a fitting time a night thinke you,
To send a Duke home without ere a man?
I would faine know where lies the masse of wealth
Which you have whoorded for my maintenance,
That I may beare my beard out of the levell
Of my Lords Stirop. COR. What? because we are poore,
Shall we be vitious? FLAM. Pray what meanes have you
To keepe me from the gallies, or the gallowes?
My father prov'd himselfe a Gentleman,
Sold al's land, and like a fortunate fellow,

Died ere the money was spent. You brought me up,
At *Padua* I confesse, where I protest
For want of meanes, the University judge me,
I have bene faine to heele my Tutors stockings
At least seven yeares: Conspiring with a beard
Made me a Graduate—then to this Dukes service—
I visited the Court, whence I return'd
More courteous, more letcherous by farre,
But not a suite the richer; and shall I,
Having a path so open and so free
To my preferment, still retaine your milke
In my pale forehead? no this face of mine
I'le arme and fortefie with lusty wine,
'Gainst shame and blushing.
COR. O that I ne're had borne thee!
FLAM. So would I.
I would the common'st Courtezan in *Rome*,
Had bene my mother rather then thy selfe.
Nature is very pitti[illegible]full to whoores
To give them but few children, yet those children
Plurality of fathers—they are sure
They shall not want. Go, go,
Complaine unto my great Lord Cardinall,
Yet may be he will justifie the act.
Lycurgus wondred much, men would provide
Good stalions for their Mares, and yet would suffer
Their faire wives to be barren—
COR. Misery of miseries! *Exit Cornelia.*
FLAM. The Dutchesse come to Court, I like not that—
Wee are ingag'd to mischiefe and must on.
As Rivers to finde out the Ocean
Flow with crooke bendings beneath forced bankes,
Or as wee see to aspire some mountaines top,
The way ascends not straight, but Imitates
The suttle fouldings of a Winters snake,
So who knowes policy and her true aspect,
Shall finde her waies winding and indirect. *Exit.*

[ACT II. SCENE I.]

[*Rome. Francisco's Palace.*]

Enter Francisco de Medicis, *Cardinall* Mountcelso, Marcello, Isabella, *young* Giovanni, *with little* Jaques *the Moore.*

FRAN. Have you not seene your husband since you arived?
ISAB. Not yet sir. FRAN. Surely he is wondrous kind—
If I had [such a] Dove-house as *Camillo's*
I would set fire on't, wer't but to destroy
The Pole-cats that haunt to't. . . my sweet cossin.
GIO. Lord unkle you did promise mee a horse
And armour. FRAN. That I did my pretty cossin,
Marcello see it fitted. MAR. My Lord, the Duke is here.
FRAN. Sister away, you must not yet bee seene.
ISAB. I do beseech you
Intreate him mildely, let not your rough tongue
Set us at louder variance—all my wrongs
Are freely pardoned, and I do not doubt
As men to try the precious Unicornes horne
Make of the powder a preservative Circle
And in it put a spider, so these armes
Shall charme his poyson, force it to obeying
And keepe him chast from an infected straying.
FRAN. I wish it may. Be gone. *Exit* [*Isabella*].

Enter Brachiano, and Flamineo.

Void the chamber— [*Exeunt Flamineo, Marcello, Giovanni,*
You are welcome, will you sit?—I pray my Lord *and Jaques.*]
Bee you my Orator, my hearts too full,
I'le second you anon. MONT. E're I beginne
Let me entreat your grace forgo all passion
Which may be raised by my free discourse.
BRAC. As silent as i'th Church—you may proceed.
MONT. It is a wonder to your noble friends,
That you [that] have as 'twere entred the world,
With a free Scepter in your able hand,
And have to th'use of nature well applyed
High gifts of learning, should in your prime-age

Neglect your awfull throne, for the soft downe
Of an insatiate bed. oh my Lord,
The Drunkard after all his lavish cuppes,
Is dry, and then is sober—so at length,
When you awake from this lascivious dreame,
Repentance then will follow; like the sting
Plac't in the Adders tayle: wretched are Princes
When fortune blasteth but a petty flower
Of their unweldy crownes; or ravesheth
But one pearle from their Scepter: but alas!
When they to wilfull shipwrake loose good Fame
All Princely titles perish with their name.
BRAC. You have said my Lord—MON. Inough to give you tast
How farre I am from flattering your greatnesse?
BRAC. Now you that are his second, what say you?
Do not like yong hawkes fetch a course about,
Your game flies faire and for you—FRAN. Do not feare it:
I'le answere you in your owne hawking phrase—
Some Eagles that should gaze upon the Sunne
Seldome soare high, but take their lustfull ease,
Since they from dunghill birds their prey can ceaze—
You know *Vittoria*—BRA. Yes.
FRAN. You shift your shirt there
When you retire from Tennis. BRAC. Happely.
FRAN. Her husband is Lord of a poore fortune
Yet she wears cloth of Tissue—BRAC. What of this?
Will you urge that my good Lord Cardinall
As part of her confession at next Shrift,
And know from whence it sailes? FRAN. She is your Strumpet—
BRAC. Uncivill sir ther's Hemlocke in thy breath
And that blacke slander—were she a whore of mine,
All thy loud Cannons, and thy borrowed Switzers
Thy Gallies, nor thy sworne confederates,
Durst not supplant her. FRAN. Let's not talke on thunder—
Thou hast a wife, our sister; would I had given
Both her white hands to death, bound and lockt fast
In her last winding sheete, when I gave thee
But one. BRAC. Thou hadst given a soule to God then.
FRAN. True,
Thy ghostly father with al's absolution,

Shall ne're do so by thee. BRAC. Spit thy poyson—
FRAN. I shall not need, lust carries her sharpe whippe
At her owne girdle; looke to't, for our anger
Is making thunder-bolts. BRAC. Thunder! infaith,
They are but crackers. FRAN. Wee'le end this with the Cannon.
BRAC. Thou'lt get nought by it but iron in thy wounds,
And gunpowder in thy nostrels. FRAN. Better that
Then change perfumes for plaisters—BRAC. Pitty on thee,
'Twere good you'ld shew your slaves or men condemn'd
Your new-plow'd [fore-head. Defiance!—and] I'le meete thee,
Even in a thicket of thy ablest men.
MON. My Lords, you shall not word it any further
Without a milder limit. FRAN. Willingly.
BRAC. Have you proclaimed a Triumph that you baite
A Lyon thus? MON. My Lord. BRAC. I am tame, I am tame sir.
F[R]AN. We send unto the Duke for conference
Bout leavyes 'gainst the Pyrates; my Lord Duke
Is not at home; we come our selfe in person,
Still my Lord Duke is busied; but we feare
When Tyber to each proling passenger
Discovers flockes of wild-duckes, then my Lord
('Bout moulting time, I meane) wee shall be certaine
To finde you sure enough and speake with you.
BRAC. Ha!
F[R]AN. A meere tale of a tub, my wordes are idle—
But to expresse the Sonnet by naturall reason, *Enter Giovanni.*
When Stagges grow melancholike you'le finde the season.
MON. No more my Lord, heare comes a Champion,
Shall end the difference betweene you both;
Your sonne the Prince *Giovanni*—see my Lords
What hopes you store in him—this is a casket
For both your Crowns, & should be held like deere:
Now is he apt for knowledge, therefore know
It is a more direct and even way
To traine to vertue those of Princely bloud,
By examples then by precepts: if by examples,
Whom should he rather strive to imitate
Then his owne father? be his patterne then,
Leave him a stocke of vertue that may last,
Should fortune rend his sailes, and split his mast.

BRA. Your hand boy—growing to [a] souldier? GIO. Give me a pike.
FRAN. What, practising your pike so yong, faire cous?
GIO. Suppose me one of *Homers* frogges, my Lord,
Tossing my bul-rush thus—pray sir tell mee
Might not a child of good descretion
Be leader to an army? FRAN. Yes cousin a yong Prince
Of good descretion might. GIO. Say you so?
Indeed I have heard 'tis fit a Generall
Should not endanger his owne person oft.
So that he make a noyse, when hee's a horsebacke
Like a danske drummer—ô 'tis excellent.
Hee need not fight, me thinkes his horse as well
Might lead an army for him; if I live
I'le charge the French foe, in the very front
Of all my troupes, the formost man. FRA. What, what!
GIO. And will not bid my Souldiers up and follow
But bid them follow me. BRAC. Forward Lap-wing,
He flies with the shell on's head. FRAN. Pretty cousin!
GIO. The first yeare unkle that I go to warre,
All prisoners that I take I will set free
Without their ransome. FRAN. Ha, without th[ei]r ransome?
How then will you reward your souldiers
That tooke those prisoners for you? GIO. Thus my Lord,
I'le marry them to all the wealthy widowes
That fals that yeare. FRAN. Why then the next yeare following
You'le have no men to go with you to warre.
GIO. Why then I'le presse the women to the war,
And then the men will follow. MON. Witty Prince!
FRAN. See a good habite makes a child a man,
Whereas a bad one makes a man a beast:
Come you and I are friends. BRAC. Most wishedly,
Like bones which broke in sunder and well set
Knit the more strongly. FRAN. Call *Camillo* hither. [*Exit*
You have received the rumor, how Count *Lodowicke* *Serv.*]
Is turn'd a Pyrate? BRAC. Yes. FRA. We are now preparing,
Some shippes to fetch him in: behold your Dutchesse— [*Enter*
Wee now will leave you and expect from you *Isabella.*]
Nothing but kind intreaty. BRAC. You have charm'd mee.
Exeunt Fr. Mon. Giov.

You are in health we see. ISA. And above health
To see my Lord well—BRAC. So!—I wonder much,
What amorous whirlewind hurryed you to *Rome*.
ISA. Devotion my Lord. BRAC. Devotion?
Is your soule charg'd with any grievous sinne?
ISA. 'Tis burdened with too many; and I thinke
The oftner that we cast our reckonings up,
Our sleepes will be the sounder. BRAC. Take your chamber.
ISA. Nay my deere Lord I will not have you angry,
Doth not my absence from you two moneths,
Merit one kisse? BRAC. I do not use to kisse—
If that will dispossesse your jealousy,
I'le sweare it to you. ISA. O my loved Lord,
I do not come to chide; my jealousy!
I am to learne what that *Italian* meanes—
You are as welcome to these longing armes,
As I to you a Virgine. BRAC. O your breath!
Out upon sweete meates, and continued Physicke!
The plague is in them. ISA. You have oft for these two lippes
Neglected *Cassia* or the naturall sweetes
Of the Spring-violet—they are not yet much [with]ered—
My Lord I should be merry—these your frownes
Shew, in a Helmet, lovely, but on me,
In such a peacefull enterveiw, me thinkes
They are to[o] too roughly knit. BRA. O dissemblance!
Do you bandy factions 'gainst me? have you learn't
The trick of impudent basenes to complaine
Unto your kindred? ISA. Never my deere Lord.
BRAC. Must I be haunted out, or was't your trick
To meete some amorous gallant heere in Rome,
That must supply our discontinuance?
ISA. I pray sir burst my heart, and in my death
Turne to your antient pitty, though not love.
BRA. Because your brother is the corpulent Duke,
That is, the great Duke, S'death I shall not shortly
Rackit away five hundreth Crownes at Tenis,
But it shall rest upon record: I scorne him
Like a shav'd Pollake; all his reverent wit
Lies in his wardrope, hee's a discret fellow
When hee's made up in his roabes of state—

Your brother the great Duke, because h'as gallies,
And now and then ransackes a Turkish flye-boate,
(Now all the hellish furies take his soule,)
First made this match—accursed be the Priest
That sang the wedding Masse, and even my Issue.
ISA. O to[o] too far you have curst. BRA. Your hand I'le kisse,
This is the latest ceremony of my love,
Hence-forth I'le never lye with thee—by this,
This wedding-ring: I'le ne're more lye with thee.
And this divorce shall be as truely kept,
As if the Judge had doom'd it: fare you well,
Our sleeps are sever'd. ISA. Forbid it the sweet union
Of all things blessed; why the Saints in heaven
Will knit their browes at that. BRA. Let not thy love
Make thee an unbeleever—this my vow
Shall never, on my soule, bee satisfied
With my repentance: let thy brother rage
Beyond a horred tempest or sea-fight,
My vow is fixed. ISA. O my winding sheet,
Now shall I need thee shortly—deere my Lord,
Let me heare once more, what I would not heare—
Never? BRA. Never!
ISA. O my unkind Lord may your sins find mercy,
As I upon a woefull widowed bed,
Shall pray for you, if not to turne your eyes
Upon your wretched wife, and hopefull sonne,
Yet that in time you'le fix them upon heaven.
BRAC. No more, go, go, complaine to the great Duke.
ISA. No my deere Lord, you shall have present witnesse,
How I'le worke peace betweene you; I will make
My selfe the author of your cursed vow.
I have some cause to do it, you have none;
Conceale it I beseech you, for the weale
Of both your Dukedomes, that you wrought the meanes
Of such a separation—let the fault
Remaine with my supposed jealousy—
And thinke with what a pitteous and rent heart,
I shall performe this sad insuing part.

Enter Francisco, Flamineo, Mont[i]celso, Marcello.

BRAC. Well, take your course. My honourable brother!
FRAN. Sister—this is not well my Lord—why sister—
She merits not this welcome. BRAC. Welcome, say?
Shee hath given a sharpe welcome. FRAN. Are you foolish?
Come dry your teares, is this a modest course
To better what is nought, to raile and weepe?
Grow to a reconcilement, or by heaven,
I'le nere more deale betweene you. ISA. Sir you shall not—
No though *Vittoria* upon that condition
Would become honest. FRAN. Was your husband loud,
Since we departed? ISA. By my life sir no,
I sweare by that I do not care to loose.
Are all these ruines of my former beauty,
Laid out for a whores triumph? FRA. Do you heare?—
Looke upon other women, with what patience
They suffer these slight wrongs, with what justice
They study to requite them—take that course.
ISA. O that I were a man, or that I had power
To execute my apprehended wishes,
I would whip some with scorpions. FRAN. What? turn'd fury?
ISA. To dig the strumpets eyes out, let her lye
Some twenty monethes a-dying, to cut off
Her nose and lippes, pull out her rotten teeth,
Preserve her flesh like *Mummia*, for trophies
Of my just anger: Hell to my affliction
Is meere snow-water: by your favour sir—
Brother draw neere, and my Lord Cardinall—
Sir let me borrow of you but one kisse,
Hence-forth I'le never lye with you, by this,
This wedding-ring. FRA. How? nere more lie with him?
ISA. And this divorce shall be as truly kept,
As if in thronged Court, a thousand eares
Had heard it, and a thousand Lawyers hands
Seal'd to the separation. BRAC. Nere lie with me?
ISA. Let not my former dotage,
Make thee an unbelever, this my vow
Shall never on my soule be satisfied
With my repentance, *manet alta mente* [*repostum*].

FRAN. Now by my birth you are a foolish, mad,
And jealous woman. BRA. You see 'tis not my seeking.
FRAN. Was this your circle of pure Unicornes horne,
You said should charme your Lord? now hornes upon thee,
For jealousy deserves them—keepe your vow,
And take your chamber. ISA. No sir I'le presently to *Padua*,
I will not stay a minute. MONT. O good Madame.
BRAC. 'Twere best to let her have her humor,
Some halfe daies journey will bring downe her stomacke,
And then she'le turne in post. FRAN. To see her come
To my Lord Cardinall for a dispensation
Of her rash vow will beget excellent laughter.
ISA. "Unkindnesse do thy office, poore heart breake,
"Those are the killing greifes which dare not speake. *Exit.*
MAR. *Camillo's* come my Lord. *Enter Camillo.*
FRAN. Where's the commission? MAR. Tis here.
FRAN. Give me the Signet.
FLAM. [*To Brac.*] My Lord do you marke their whispering, I will compound a medicine out of their two heads, stronger then garlick, deadlier then stibium—the Cantarides which are scarce seene to sticke upon the flesh when they work to the heart, shall not do it with more silence or invisible cunning. *Enter Doctor.*
BRAC. About the murder.
FLAM. They are sending him to *Naples*, but I'le send him to *Candy*, her[e]'s another property to[o]. BRAC. O the Doctor!
FLA. A poore quackesalving knave, my Lord, one that should have bene lasht for's letchery, but that he confest a judgement, had an execution laid upon him, and so put the whip to a *non-plus*.
DOCT. And was cosin'd, my Lord, by an arranter knave then my selfe, and made pay all the coulourable execution.
FLAM. He will shoot pils into a mans guts, shall make them have more ventages then a cornet or a lamprey, hee will poyson a kisse, and was once minded, for his Master-peece, because *Ireland* breeds no poyson, to have prepared a deadly vapour in a *Spaniards* fart that should have poison'd all *Dublin*.
BRAC. O Saint *Anthony* fire!
DOCT. Your Secretary is merry my Lord:
FLAM. O thou cursed antipathy to nature—looke, his eye's bloud-shed like a needle a Chirurgeon stitcheth a wound with—let me embrace thee toad, & love thee ô thou abhominable loth-

some gargarisme, that will fetch up lungs, lights, heart, and liver by scruples.

BRAC. No more—I must employ thee honest Doctor,
You must to *Padua* and by the way,
Use some of your skil for us. DOC. Sir I shall.
BRAC. But for *Camillo*?
FLAM. He dies this night by such a polliticke straine,
Men shall suppose him by's owne engine slaine.
But for your Dutchesse death? DOCT. I'le make her sure.
BRAC. Small mischiefes are by greater made secure.
FLAM. Remember this you slave, when knaves come to preferment they rise as gallouses are raised i'th low countries, one upon another['s] shoulders. *Exeunt.*

MONT. Here is an Embleme nephew pray peruse it.
'Twas throwne in at your window—CAM. At my window?
Here is a Stag my Lord hath shed his hornes,
And for the losse of them the poore beast weepes—
The word, *Inopem me copia fecit.* MON. That is.
Plenty of hornes hath made him poore of hornes.
CAM. What should this meane? MON. Ile tell you, 'tis given out
You are a Cocould. CAM. Is it given out so?
I had rather such report as that my Lord,
Should keepe within dores. FRAN. Have you any children?
CAM. None my Lord. FRA. You are the happier—
Ile tell you a tale. CAM. Pray my Lord. FRAN. An old tale.
Uppon a time *Phœbus* the God of light
Or him wee call the Sunne would neede be married.
The Gods gave their consent, and *Mercury*
Was sent to voice it to the generall world.
But what a pitious cry their straight arose
Amongst Smiths, & Felt-makers, Brewers & Cooks,
Reapers and Butter-women, amongst Fishmongers
And thousand other trades, which are annoyed
By his excessive heate! twas lamentable,
They came to *Jupiter* all in a sweat
And do forbid the banes; a great fat Cooke
Was made their Speaker, who intreates of *Jove*
That *Phœbus* might bee guelded, for if now
When there was but one Sunne, so many men
Weare like to perish by his violent heate,

What should they do if hee were married
And should beget more, and those children
Make fier-workes like their father? so say I,
Only I will apply it to your wife,
Her issue, should not providence prevent it,
Would make both nature, time, and man repent it.
MON. Looke you cossin.
Go change the aire for shame, see if your absence,
Will blast your *Cornucopia—Marcello*
Is chosen with you joint commissioner
For the relieving our Italian coast
From pirats. MAR. I am much honord int. CAM. But sir
Ere I returne the Stagges hornes may be sprouted,
Greater then these are shed. MONT. Do not feare it,
I'le bee your ranger. CAM. You must watch i'th nights,
Then's the most danger. FRAN. Farewell good *Marcello.*
All the best fortunes of a Souldiers wish,
Bring you a ship-board.
CAM. Were I not best now I am turn'd Souldier,
E're that I leave my wife, sell all shee hath,
And then take leave of her? MONT. I expect good from you,
Your parting is so merry.
CAM. Merry, my Lord, a'th Captaines humor right;
I am resolved to be drunke this night. [*Exeunt Camillo and*
FRA. So, 'twas well fitted, now shall we descerne, *Marcello.*]
How his wisht absence will give violent way
To Duke *Brachiano's* lust— MONT. Why that was it;
To what scorn'd purpose else should we make choice
Of him for a sea Captaine? and besides,
Count *Lodowicke* which was rumor'd for a pirate,
Is now in *Padua.* FRAN. Is't true? MONT. Most certaine.
I have letters from him, which are suppliant
To worke his quicke repeale from banishment—
He meanes to adresse himselfe for pention,
Unto our sister Dutchesse. FRAN. O 'twas well.
We shall not want his absence past sixe daies.
I faine would have the Duke *Brachiano* run
Into notorious scandale, for their's nought
In such curst dotage, to repaire his name,
Onely the deepe sence of some deathlesse shame.

MON. It may be objected I am dishonourable,
To play thus with my kinsman, but I answere,
For my revenge I'de stake a brothers life,
That being wrong'd durst not avenge himselfe.
FRA. Come to observe this Strumpet. MON. Cursse of greatnes,
Sure hee'le not leave her. FRAN. There's small pitty in't—
Like mistle-tow on seare Elmes spent by weather,
Let him cleave to her and both rot together. *Exeunt.*

[SCENE II.]

[*Rome. Camillo's House.*]

Enter Brachiano *with one in the habite of a Conjurer.*

BRAC. Now sir I claime your promise, 'tis dead midnight,
The time prefixt to shew me by your Art,
How the intended murder[s] of *Camillo*,
And our loathed Dutchesse grow to action.
CON. You have won me by your bounty to a deed,
I do not often practise—some there are,
Which by Sophisticke tricks, aspire that name
Which I would gladly loose, of Nigromancer;
As some that use to juggle upon cardes,
Seeming to conjure, when indeed they cheate,
Others that raise up their confederate spirits,
'Bout wind-mils, and indanger their owne neckes,
For making of a squib, and some their are
Will keepe a curtall to shew juggling trickes
And give out 'tis a spirit: besides these
Such a whole reame of Almanacke-makers, figure-flingers,
Fellowes indeed that onely live by stealth,
Since they do meerely lie about stolne goods—
Thei'd make men thinke the divell were fast and loose,
With speaking fustian Lattine: pray sit downe,
Put on this night-cap sir, 'tis charm'd, and now
I'le shew you by my strong-commanding Art
The circumstance that breakes your Dutch[e]sse heart.

A Dumbe Shew.

Enter suspiciously, Julio *and* Christophero, *they draw a curtaine wher* Brachian[o]'s *picture is, they put on spectacles of glasse, which cover their eyes and noses, and then burne perfumnes afore the picture, and wash the lips of the picture, that done, quenching the fire, and putting off their spectacles they depart laughing.*

Enter Isabella *in her night-gowne as to bed-ward, with lights after her, Count* Lodovico, Giovanni, Guid-antonio *and others waighting on her, shee kneeles downe as to prayers, then drawes the curtaine of the picture, doe's three reverences to it, and kisses it thrice, shee faints and will not suffer them to come nere it, dies, sorrow exprest in* Giovanni *and in* Count Lodovico, *shees conveid out solemnly.*

Brac. Excellent, then shee's dead—Con. She's poysoned,
By the fum'd picture—'twas her custome nightly,
Before shee went to bed, to go and visite
Your picture, and to feed her eyes and lippes
On the dead shadow—Doctor *Julio*
Observing this, infects it with an oile
And other poison'd stuffe, which presently
Did suffocate her spirits. Brac. Me thought I saw
Count *Lodowicke* there. Con. He was, and by my art
I finde hee did most passionately doate
Upon your Dutchesse—now turne another way,
And veiw *Camillo's* farre more polliticke fa[t]e—
Strike louder musicke from this charmed ground,
To yeeld, as fits the act, a Tragicke sound.

The Second Dumbe Shew.

Enter Flamineo, Marcello, Camillo, *with foure more as Captaines, they drinke healths and dance, a vauting horse is brought into the roome;* Marcello *and two more whisper'd out of the roome, while* Flamineo *and* Camillo *strip themselves into their shirts, as to vault; complement who shall beginne; as* Camillo *is about to vault,* Flamineo *pitcheth him upon his necke, and with the help of the rest, writhes his necke about, seemes to see if it be broke, and layes him foulded double as 'twere under the horse, makes* [shewe] *to call for helpe,* Marcello *comes in, laments, sends for the Cardinall and Duke, who comes forth with armed men,*

wonder[s] at the act, commands the bodie to be carried home, apprehends Flamineo, Marcello, *and the rest, and go[es] as 'twere to apprehend* Vittoria.

BRAC. 'Twas quaintly done, but yet each circumstance
I tast not fully. CON. O 'twas most apparant,
You saw them enter charged with their deepe helthes
To their boone voyage, and to second that,
Flamineo cals to have a vaulting horse
Maintaine their sport. The vertuous *Marcello*,
Is innocently plotted forth the roome,
Whilst your eye saw the rest, and can informe you
The engine of all. [BRAC.] It seemes *Marcello*, and *Flamineo*
Are both committed. CON. Yes, you saw them guarded,
And now they are come with purpose to apprehend
Your Mistresse, faire *Vittoria*; wee are now
Beneath her roofe: 'twere fit we instantly
Make out by some backe posterne: BRAC. Noble friend.
You bind me ever to you—this shall stand
As the firme seale annexed to my hand.
It shall inforce a payment. CON. Sir I thanke you. *Exit Brac.*
Both flowers and weedes, spring when the Sunne is warme,
And great men do great good, or else great harme. *Exit Con.*

[ACT III. SCENE I.]

[*Rome. The Ante-chamber of a Court of Justice.*]

Enter Francisco, and Monticelso, their Chancellor and Register.

FRAN. You have dealt discreetly to obtaine the presence
Of all the grave Leiger Embassadours
To heare *Vittorias* triall. MON. 'Twas not ill,
For sir you know we have nought but circumstances
To charge her with, about her husbands death,
Their approbation therefore to the proofes
Of her blacke lust, shall make her infamous
To all our neighbouring Kingdomes—I wonder
If *Brachiano* will be here. FRA. O fye
'Twere impudence too palpable. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Flamineo and Marcello guarded, and a Lawyer.

LAW. What, are you in by the weeke? So—I will try now whether thy wit be close prisoner—mee thinke's none should sit upon thy sister but old whoore-maisters—

FLAM. Or cocoulds, for your cocould is your most terrible tickler of letchery: whoore-maisters would serve, for none are judges at tilting, but those that have bene old Tilters.

LAW. My Lord Duke and shee have bene very private:

FLAM. You are a dull asse, 'tis threatned they have bene very publicke.

LAW. If it can be proved they have but kist one another...

FLAM. What then? LAW. My Lord Cardinall will ferit them—

FLAM. A Cardinall I hope will not catch conyes.

LAW. For to sowe kisses (marke what I say) to sowe kisses, is to reape letchery, and I am sure a woman that will endure kissing is halfe won.

FLAM. True, her upper part by that rule—if you will win her nether part to[o] you know what followes.

LAW. Harke the Embassadours are lighted—

FLAM. [*aside*] I do put on this feigned Garbe of mirth,
To gull suspition.

MAR. O my unfortunate sister!
I would my daggers point had cleft her heart
When she first saw *Brachiano*: You 'tis said,
Were made his engine, and his stauking horse
To undo my sister. FLAM. I made a kind of path
To her & mine owne preferment. MAR. Your ruine.

FLAM. Hum! thou art a souldier,
Followest the great Duke, feedest his victories,
As witches do their serviceable spirits,
Even with thy prodigall bloud—what hast got
But like the wealth of Captaines, a poore handfull?—
Which in thy palme thou bear'st, as men hold water—
Seeking to gripe it fast, the fraile reward
Steales through thy fingers. MAR. Sir!

FLAM. Thou hast scarce maintenance
To keepe thee in fresh shamoyes. MAR. Brother!

FLAM. Heare me,

And thus when we have even powred our selves,
Into great fights, for their ambition
Or idle spleene, how shall we find reward?
But as we seldome find the mistle-towe
Sacred to physicke [on] the builder Oke,
Without a Mandrake by it, so in our quest of gaine.
Alas the poorest of their forc'd dislikes
At a limbe proffers, but at heart it strikes:
This is lamented doctrine. MAR. Come, come.
FLAM. When age shall turne thee,
White as a blooming hauthorne... MAR. I'le interrupt you.
For love of vertue beare an honest heart,
And stride over every polliticke respect,
Which where they most advance they most infect.
Were I your father, as I am your brother,
I should not be ambitious to leave you
A better patrimony. FLA. I'le think on't—
The Lord Embassadors. *Enter Savoy* [*Embassadour*].
Here there is a passage of the Lieger Embassadours over the Stage severally. Enter French Embassadour.
LAW. O my sprightly Frenchman, do you know him?—he's an admirable Tilter.
FLAM. I saw him at last Tilting, he shewed like a peuter candlesticke fashioned like a man in armour, houlding a Tilting staffe in his hand, little bigger then a candle of twelve i'th pound.
LAW. O but he's an excellent horseman.
FLAM. A lame one in his lofty trickes, hee sleepes a horse-backe like a poulter— *Enter English and Spanish*
LAW. Lo you my *Spaniard.* [*Embassadours*].
FLAM. He carries his face in's ruffe, as I have seene a serving-man carry glasses in a cipres hat-band, monstrous steddy for feare of breaking—He lookes like the claw of a blacke-bird, first salted and then broyled in a candle. *Exeunt.*

[SCENE II.]

[*A Court of Justice.*]

THE ARAIGNEMENT OF VITTORIA.

Enter Francisco, Mont[i]celso, the sixe lieger Embassadours, Brachiano, Vittoria, [Zanche, Flamineo, Marcello,] Lawyer, and a guard.

MONT. Forbeare my Lord, here is no place assign'd you,
This businesse by his holinesse is left
To our examination.
BRA. May it thrive with you. *Laies a rich gowne*
FRAN. A Chaire there for his Lordship. *under him.*
BRA. Forbeare your kindnesse, an unbidden guest
Should travaile as dutch-women go to Church:
Beare their stooles with them. MON. At your pleasure Sir.
Stand to the table gentlewom[a]n: now Signior
Fall to your plea.
[LAW.] *Domine Iudex converte oculos in hanc pestem mulierum corruptissimam.* VIT. Whats he?
FRAN. A Lawyer, that pleades against you.
VIT. Pray my Lord, Let him speake his usuall tongue
Ile make no answere else. FRAN. Why you understand lattin
VIT. I do Sir, but amongst this auditory
Which come to heare my cause, the halfe or more
May bee ignorant in't. MON. Go on Sir:
VIT. By your favour,
I will not have my accusation clouded,
In a strange tongue: All this assembly
Shall heare what you can charge mee with. FRAN. Signior,
You need not stand on't much; pray change your language.
MON. Oh for God sake: gentlewoman, your credit
Shall bee more famous by it.
LAW. Well then have at you.
VIT. I am at the marke Sir, Ile give aime to you,
And tell you how neare you shoote.
LAW. Most literated Judges, please your Lordships,
So to connive your Judgements to the view
Of this debausht and diversivolent woman

Who such a blacke concatenation
Of mischiefe hath effected, that to exterpe
The memory of't, must be the consummation
Of her and her projections—VIT. What's all this?
LAW. Hould your peace.
Exorbitant sinnes must have exulceration.
VIT. Surely my Lords this lawier here hath swallowed
Some Poticaryes bils, or proclamations.
And now the hard and undegestable wordes,
Come up like stones wee use give Haukes for phisicke.
Why this is welch to Lattin. LAW. My Lords, the woman
Know's not her tropes nor figures, nor is perfect
In the accademick derivation
Of Grammaticall elocution. FRAN. Sir your paynes
Shall bee well spared, and your deepe eloquence
Bee worthely applauded amongst those
Which understand you. LAW. My good Lord! FRAN. Sir,
Put up your papers in your fustian bag— *Francisco speakes this*
Cry mercy Sir, tis buckeram—and accept *as in scorne.*
My notion of your learn'd verbosity.
LAW. I most graduatically thanke your Lordship.
I shall have use for them elswhere. [*Exit Lawyer.*]
MON. I shall bee playner with you, and paint out
Your folies in more naturall red and white,
Then that upon your cheeke. VIT. O you mistake.
You raise a blood as noble in this cheeke
As ever was your mothers.
MON. I must spare you till proofe cry whore to that;
Observe this creature here my honoured Lords,
A woman of a most prodigious spirit
In her effected. VIT. Honorable my Lord,
It doth not sute a reverend Cardinall
To play the Lawier thus.
MON. Oh your trade instructs your language!
You see my Lords what goodly fruict she seemes,
Yet like those apples travellers report
To grow where *Sodom* and *Gomora* stood,
I will but touch her and you straight shall see
Sheele fall to soote and ashes. VIT. Your invenom'd
Poticary should doo't. MON. I am resolved

Were there a second Paradice to loose
This Devell would betray it. VIT. O poore charity!
Thou art seldome found in scarlet.
MON. Who knowes not how, when severall night by night
Her gates were choak'd with coaches, and her roomes
Out-brav'd the stars with severall kind of lights,
When shee did counterfet a Princes Court,
In musicke banquets and most ryotous surfets
This whore, forsooth, was holy?
VIT. Ha? whore—what's that?
MON. Shall I expound whore to you? sure I shal;
Ile give their perfect character. They are first,
Sweete meates which rot the eater: In mans nostrill
Poison'd perfumes. They are coosning Alcumy,
Shipwrackes in Calmest weather. What are whores?
Cold Russian winters, that appeare so barren,
As if that nature had forgot the spring.
They are the trew matteriall fier of hell,
Worse then those tributes ith low countries payed,
Exactions upon meat, drinke, garments, sleepe,
I even on mans perdition, his sin.
They are those brittle evidences of law
Which forfait all a wretched mans estate
For leaving out one sillable. What are whores?
They are those flattering bels have all one tune
At weddings, and at funerals: your ritch whores
Are only treasuries by extortion fild,
And empt[i]ed by curs'd riot. They are worse,
Worse then dead bodies, which are beg'd at gallowes
And wrought upon by surgeons, to teach man
Wherin hee is imperfect. Whats a whore?
Shees like the guilty conterfetted coine
Which who so eare first stampes it, bring[s] in trouble
All that receave it. VIT. This carracter scapes me.
MON. You, gentlewoman!
Take from all beasts, and from all mineralls
Their deadly poison—VIT. Well what then? MON. Ile tell thee—
Ile find in thee a Poticaries shop
To sample them all. FR. EMB. Shee hath lived ill.
ENG. EMB. Trew, but the Cardinals too bitter.

MON. You know what Whore is; next the devell, Adultry,
Enters the devell, Murder. FRAN. Your unhappy
Husband is dead. VIT. O hee's a happy husband—
Now hee owes Nature nothing.
FRAN. And by a vaulting engine! MON. An active plot—
Hee jumpt into his grave. FRAN. what a prodigy was't,
That from some two yardes height a slender man
Should breake his necke! MON. Ith' rushes. FRA. And what's more,
Upon the instant loose all use of speach,
All vitall motion, like a man had laine
Wound up three dayes. Now marke each circumstance.
MON. And looke upon this creature was his wife.
Shee comes not like a widow: shee comes arm'd
With scorne and impudence: Is this a mourning habit?
VIT. Had I forknowne his death as you suggest,
I would have bespoke my mourning.
MON. O you are conning.
VIT. You shame your wit and Judgement
To call it so; What, is my just defence
By him that is my Judge cal'd impudence?
Let mee appeale then from this Christian Court
To the uncivill Tartar. MON. See my Lords.
Shee scandals our proceedings. VIT. Humbly thus,
Thus low, to the most worthy and respected
Leigier Embassadors, my modesty
And womanhood I tender; but withall
So intangled in a cursed accusation
That my defence of force like *Perseus*,
Must personate masculine vertue—To the point!
Find mee but guilty, sever head from body:
Weele part good frindes: I scorne to hould my life
At yours or any mans intreaty, Sir.
ENG. EMB. Shee hath a brave spirit.
MON. Well, well, such counterfet Jewels
Make trew [ones] oft suspected. VIT. You are deceaved.
For know that all your strickt-combined heads,
Which strike against this mine of diamondes,
Shall prove but glassen hammers, they shall breake—
These are but faigned shadowes of my evels.

Terrify babes, my Lord, with painted devils,
I am past such needlesse palsy—for your names,
Of Whoore and Murdresse they proceed from you,
As if a man should spit against the wind,
The filth returne's in's face.
MON. Pray you Mistresse satisfy me one question:
Who lodg'd beneath your roofe that fatall night
Your husband brake his necke? BRA. That question
[*Brachiano springs to his feet.*]
Inforceth me breake silence—I was there.
MONT. Your businesse? BRAC. Why I came to comfort her,
And take some course for setling her estate,
Because I heard her husband was in debt
To you my Lord. MONT. He was.
BRAC. And 'twas strangely fear'd,
That you would cosen her. MONT. Who made you over-seer?
BRAC. Why my charity, my charity, which should flow
From every generous and noble spirit,
To orphans and to widdows. MONT. Your lust!
BRA. Cowardly dogs barke loudest. Sirrah Priest,
Ile talke with you hereafter,——Do you heare?
The sword you frame of such an excellent temper,
I'le sheath in your owne bowels:
There are a number of thy coate resemble
Your common post-boyes. MONT. Ha?
BRAC. Your mercinary post-boyes—
Your letters carry truth, but 'tis your guise
To fill your mouth's with grosse and impudent lies. [*He makes*
SER. My Lord your gowne. *for the door.*]
BRAC. Thou liest 'twas my stoole.
Bestow't upon thy maister that will challenge
The rest a'th houshold-stuffe—for *Brachiano*
Was nere so beggarly, to take a stoole
Out of anothers lodging: let him make
Valence for his bed on't, or a demy foote-cloth,
For his most reverent moile—*Monticelso,*
Nemo me Impune lacessit. *Exit Brachiano.*
MON. Your Champions gon.
VIT. The wolfe may prey the better.
FRA. My Lord there's great suspition of the murder,

But no sound proofe who did it: for my part
I do not thinke she hath a soule so blacke
To act a deed so bloudy—if shee have,
As in cold countries husband-men plant Vines,
And with warme bloud manure them, even so
One summer she will beare unsavory fruite,
And ere next spring wither both branch and roote.
The act of bloud let passe, onely descend
To matter of incontinence. VIT. I decerne poison,
Under your guilded pils.
MON. Now the Duke's gone, I wil produce a letter,
Wherein 'twas plotted, [he] and you should meete,
At an Appoticaries summer-house,
Downe by the river Tiber: veiw't my Lords:
Where after wanton bathing and the heat
Of a lascivious banquet——I pray read it,
I shame to speak the rest. VIT. Grant I was tempted,
Temptation to lust proves not the act—
Casta est quam nemo rogavit—
You reade his hot love to me, but you want
My frosty answere. MON. Frost i'th dog-daies! strange!
VIT. Condemne you me for that the Duke did love mee?
So may you blame some faire and christall river
For that some melancholike distracted man,
Hath drown'd himselfe in't. MON. Truly drown'd indeed.
VIT. Summe up my faults I pray, and you shall finde,
That beauty and gay clothes, a merry heart,
And a good stomacke to [a] feast, are all,
All the poore crimes that you can charge me with:
Infaith my Lord you might go pistoll flyes,
The sport would be more noble. MON. Very good.
VIT. But take you your course, it seemes you have beggerd me first
And now would faine undo me—I have houses,
Jewels, and a poore remnant of Crusado's,
Would those would make you charitable! MON. If the devill
Did ever take good shape behold his picture.
VIT. You have one vertue left,
You will not flatter me. FRA. Who brought this letter?
VIT. I am not compel'd to tell you.

MON. My Lord Duke sent to you a thousand duckets,
The twelfth of August. VIT. 'Twas to keepe your cosen
From prison, I paid use for't. MON. I rather thinke
'Twas Interest for his lust.
VIT. Who saies so but your selfe? if you bee my accuser
Pray cease to be my Judge, come from the Bench,
Give in your evidence 'gainst me, and let these
Be moderators: my Lord Cardinall,
Were your intelligencing eares as [long]
As to my thoughts, had you an honest tongue
I would not care though you proclaim'd them all.
MONT. Go to, go to.
After your goodly and vaine-glorious banquet,
I'le give you a choake-peare. VIT. A' your owne grafting?
MON. You were borne in *Venice*, honourably descended,
From the *Vittelli*, 'twas my cossins fate—
Ill may I name the hower—to marry you,
Hee bought you of your father. VIT. Ha?
MON. Hee spent there in sixe monthes,
Twelve thousand Dukets, and to my acquaintance
Receiv'd in dowry with you not one *Julio*:
'Twas a hard peny-worth, the ware being so light.
I yet but draw the curtaine—now to your picture,
You came from thence a most notorious strumpet,
And so you have continued. VIT. My Lord!
MON. Nay heare me,
You shall have time to prate—my Lord *Brachiano*—
Alas I make but repet[it]ion,
Of what is ordinary and Ryalto talke,
And ballated, and would bee plaid a'th stage,
But that vice many times findes such loud freinds,
That Preachers are charm'd silent.
You Gentlemen *Flamineo* and *Marcello*,
The Court hath nothing now to charge you with,
Onely you must remaine upon your suerties,
For your appearance. FRA. I stand for *Marcello*
FLA. And my Lord Duke for me.
MON. For you *Vittoria*, your publicke fault,
Joyn'd to'th condition of the present time,
Takes from you all the fruits of noble pitty.

Such a corrupted triall have you made
Both of your life and beauty, and bene stil'd
No lesse in ominous fate then blasing starres
To Princes; [heare] your sentence—you are confin'd
Unto a house of convertites and your baud—
FLA. [*aside*] Who I? MON. The *Moore.*
FLA. [*aside*] O I am a sound man againe.
VIT. A house of co[n]vertites, what's that?
MON. A house
Of penitent whoores. VIT. Do the Noblemen in Rome,
Erect it for their wives, that I am sent
To lodge there? FRAN. You must have patience.
VIT. I must first have vengeance.
I faine would know if you have your salvation
By patent, that you proceed thus. MON. Away with her.
Take her hence.
VIT. A rape, a rape! MON. How? VIT. Yes you have ravisht justice,
Forc't her to do your pleasure. MON. fy shee's mad—
VIT. Dye with th[o]se pils in your most cursed [mawe],
Should bring you health, or while you sit a'th Bench,
Let your owne spittle choake you. MON. She's turn'd fury.
VIT. That the last day of judgement may so find you,
And leave you the same devill you were before—
Instruct me some good horse-lech to speak Treason,
For since you cannot take my life for deeds,
Take it for wordes—ô womans poore revenge
Which dwels but in the tongue—I will not weepe,
No I do scorne to call up one poore teare
To fawne [on] your injustice—beare me hence,
Unto this house of—what's your mittigating Title?
MON. Of convertites.
VIT. It shal not be a house of convertites—
My minde shall make it honester to mee
Then the Popes Pallace, and more peaceable
Then thy soule, though thou art a Cardinall—
Know this, and let it somewhat raise your spight,
Through darkenesse Diamonds spred their ritchest light.

Exit Vittoria.

Enter Brachiano.

BRA. Now you and I are friends sir, wee'le shake hands,
In a friends grave, together—a fit place,
Being the embleme of soft peace, t'attone our hatred.
FRA. Sir, what's the matter?
BRA. I will not chase more bloud from that lov'd cheeke,
You have lost too much already, fare-you-well. [*Exit*]
FRA. How strange these words sound! what's the interpretation?
FLA. [*aside*] Good, this is a preface to the discovery of the Dutches death: Hee carries it well: because now I cannot counterfeit a whining passion for the death of my Lady, I will faine a madde humor for the disgrace of my sister, and that will keepe off idle questions—Treasons tongue hath a villanous palsy in't, I will talk to any man, heare no man, and for a time appeare a polliticke mad-man. [*Exit.*] *Enter Giovanni, Count Lodovico.*
FRA. How now my Noble cossin—what in blacke!
GIO. Yes Unckle, I was taught to imitate you
In vertue, and you must imitate mee
In couloures for your garments—my sweete mother
Is—FRA. How? Where?
GIO. Is there—no yonder—indeed sir I'le not tell you,
For I shall make you weepe. FRA. Is dead?
GIO. Do not blame me now,
I did not tell you so. LOD. She's dead my Lord.
FRA. Dead? MON. Blessed Lady; thou art now above thy woes—
Wilt please your Lordships to with-draw a little?
GIO. What do the dead do, uncle? do they eate,
Heare musicke, goe a-hunting, and bee merrie,
As wee that live?
FRAN. No, cose; they sleepe.
GIO. Lord, Lord, that I were dead,
I have not slept these sixe nights. When doe they wake?
FRAN. When God shall please.
GIO. Good God let her sleepe ever.
For I have knowne her wake an hundreth nights,
When all the pillow, where shee laid her head,
Was brine-wet with her teares. I am to complaine to you Sir,

Ile tell you how they have used her now shees dead:
They wrapt her in a cruell fould of lead,
And would not let mee kisse her. FRAN. Thou didst love her?
GIO. I have often heard her say shee gave mee sucke,
And it should seeme by that shee deerely lov'd mee,
Since Princes seldome doe it.
FRAN. O, all of my poore sister that remaines!
Take him away for Gods sake. MON. How now my Lord?
FRAN. Beleeve mee I am nothing but her grave,
And I shall keepe her blessed memorie,
Longer then thousand Epitaphs. [*Exeunt.*]

[SCENE III.]

[*The Ante-chamber.*]

Enter Flamineo as distracted, [*Marcello, and Lodovico*].

FLA. Wee indure the strokes like anviles or hard steele,
Till paine it selfe make us no paine to feele.
Who shall doe mee right now? Is this the end of service? Ide rather go weede garlicke; travaile through France, and be mine owne ostler; weare sheepe-skin lininges; or shoos that stinke of blacking; bee entred into the list of the fourtie thousand pedlars in Poland. *Enter Savoy* [*Embassador*].
Would I had rotted in some Surgeons house at Venice, built upon the Pox as well as on piles, ere I had serv'd *Brachiano.*
SAV. You must have comfort.
FLA. Your comfortable wordes are like honie. They rellish well in your mouth that's whole; but in mine that's wounded they go downe as if the sting of the Bee were in them. Oh they have wrought their purpose cunningly, as if they would not seeme to doe it of malice. In this a Polititian imitates the devill, as the devill imitates a Canon. Wheresoever he comes to doe mischiefe, he comes with his backside towardes you.
Enter the French [*Embassador*].
FRE. [EMB.] The proofes are evident.
FLA. Proofe! 'twas corruption. O Gold, what a God art thou! and ô man, what a devill art thou to be tempted by that cursed Minerall! Yo[n] diversivolent Lawyer; marke him, knaves turne informers, as maggots turne to flies, you may catch gud-

gions with either. A Cardinall; would hee would heare mee, theres nothing so holie but mony will corrupt and putrifie it, like vittell under the line. [*Enter*] *English Embassador.* You are happie in England, my Lord; here they sell justice with those weights they presse men to death with. O horrible salarie!

ENG. [EMB.] Fie, fie, *Flamineo.*

FLA. Bels nere ring well, till they are at their full pitch, and I hope yon Cardinall shall never have the grace to pray well, till he come to the scaffold.

If they were rackt now to know the confederacie! But your Noblemen are priviledged from the racke; and well may. For a little thing would pull some of them a peeces afore they came to their arraignement. Religion; oh how it is commeddled with policie. The first bloudshed in the world happened about religion. Would I were a Jew. MAR. O, there are too many.

FLA. You are deceiv'd. There are not Jewes enough, Priests enough, nor gentlemen enough. MAR. How?

FLA. Ile prove it. For if there were Jewes enough, so many Christians would not turne usurers; if Preists enough, one should not have sixe Benefices; and if gentlemen enough, so many earlie mushromes, whose best growth sprang from a dunghill, should not aspire to gentilitie. Farewell. Let others live by begging. Bee thou one of them practize the art of *Wolnor* in England to swallow all's given thee; and yet let one purgation make thee as hungrie againe as fellowes that worke in [a] saw-pit. Ile go heare the scritch-owle. *Exit.*

LOD. [*aside*] This was *Brachiano's* Pandar, and 'tis strange
That in such open and apparant guilt
Of his adulterous sister, hee dare utter
So scandalous a passion. I must wind him. *Enter Flamineo.*

FLA. [*aside*] How dares this banisht Count returne to Rome,
His pardon not yet purchast? I have heard
The deceast Dutchesse gave him pension,
And that he came along from Padua
I'th' traine of the yong Prince. There's somewhat in't.
Phisitians, that cure poisons, still doe worke
With counterpoisons.

MAR. Marke this strange incounter.

FLA. The God of Melancholie turne thy gall to poison,

And let the stigmaticke wrincles in thy face,
Like to the boisterous waves in a rough tide
One still overtake another. LOD. I doe thanke thee
And I doe wish ingeniously for thy sake
The dog-daies all yeare long.
FLA. How crokes the raven?
Is our good Dutchesse dead? LOD. Dead. FLA. O fate!
Misfortune comes like the Crowners businesse,
Huddle upon huddle.
LOD. Shalt thou & I joyne housekeeping? FLA. Yes, content.
Let's bee unsociably sociable.
LOD. Sit some three daies together, and discourse.
FLA. Onely with making faces; lie in our clothes.
LOD. With faggots for our pillowes. FLA. And bee lowsie.
LOD. In taffeta lininges; that's gentile melancholie—
Sleepe all day. FLA. Yes: and like your melancholike hare
Feed after midnight. [*Enter Antonelli and Gasparo, laughing.*]
Wee are observed: see how yon couple greve.
LOD. What a strange creature is a laughing foole,
As if man were created to no use
But onely to shew his teeth. FLA. Ile tell thee what,
It would doe well in stead of looking glasses
To set ones face each morning by a sawcer
Of a witches congealed bloud. LOD. Pretious [rogue]!
Weel never part. FLA. Never: till the beggerie of Courtiers,
The discontent of church-men, want of souldiers,
And all the creatures that hang manacled,
Worse then strappado'd, on the lowest fellie
Of fortunes wheele be taught in our two lives
To scorne that world which life of meanes deprives.
AN. My Lord, I bring good newes. The Pope on's death-bed,
At th' earnest suit of the great Duke of Florence,
Hath sign'd your pardon, and restor'd unto you——
LOD. I thanke you for your news. Look up againe
Flamineo, see my pardon. FLAM. Why do you laugh?
There was no such condition in our covenant. LOD. Why?
FLAM. You shall not seeme a happier man then I,
You know our vow sir, if you will be merry,
Do it i'th like posture, as if some great man
Sate while his enemy were executed:

Though it be very letchery unto thee,
Doo't with a crabbed Polititians face.
LOD. Your sister is a damnable whore. FLAM. Ha?
LOD. Looke you; I spake that laughing.
FLAM. Dost ever thinke to speake againe?
LOD. Do you heare?
Wilt sel me fourty ounces of her bloud,
To water a mandrake? FL. Poore Lord, you did vow
To live a lowzy creature. LOD. Yes: FLA. Like one
That had for ever forfaited the day-light,
By being in debt— LOD. Ha, ha!
FLAM. I do not greatly wonder you do breake:
Your Lordship learn't long since. But Ile tell you—
LOD. What? FLA. And't shall sticke by you.
LOD. I long for it.
FLAM. This laughter scurvily becomes your face,
If you will not be melancholy, be angry. *Strikes him.*
See, now I laugh too.
MAR. You are to blame—Ile force you hence.
LOD. Unhand me: *Exit Mar. & Flam.*
That [e'er] I should be forc't to right my selfe,
Upon a Pandar! ANT. My Lord!
LOD. H'had bene as good met with his fist a thunderbolt.
GAS. How this shewes!
LOD. Uds' death, how did my sword misse him?
These rogues that are most weary of their lives,
Still scape the greatest dangers—
A pox upon him: all his reputation;
Nay all the goodnesse of his family;
Is not worth halfe this earthquake.
I learnt it of no fencer to shake thus;
Come, I'le forget him, and go drinke some wine. *Exeunt.*

[ACT IV. SCENE I.]

[*Rome. Francisco's Palace.*]

Enter Francis[c]o and Monticelso.

MON. Come, come my Lord, untie your foulded thoughts,
And let them dangle loose as a brid[e]'s haire.
Your sister's poisoned.
FRA. Farre bee it from my thoughts
To seeke revenge.
MON. What, are you turn'd all marble?
FRA. Shall I defye him, and impose a warre
Most burthensome on my poore subjects neckes,
Which at my will I have not power to end?
You know; for all the murders, rapes, and thefts,
Committed in the horred lust of warre,
He that unjustly caus'd it first proceed,
Shall finde it in his grave and in his seed.
MON. That's not the course I'de wish you: pray, observe me,
We see that undermining more prevailes
Then doth the Canon. Beare your wrongs conceal'd,
And, patient as the Tortoise, let this Cammell
Stalke o're your back unbruis'd: sleep with the Lyon,
And let this brood of secure foolish mice
Play with your nosthrils, till the time bee ripe
For th'bloudy audit, and the fatall gripe:
Aime like a cunning fowler, close one eie,
That you the better may your game espy.
FRA. Free me, my innocence, from treacherous actes:
I know ther's thunder yonder: and I'le stand,
Like a safe vallie, which low bends the knee
To some aspiring mountaine: since I know
Treason, like spiders weaving nets for flies,
By her foule worke is found, and in it dies.
To passe away these thoughts—my honour'd Lord,
It is reported you possesse a booke
Wherein you have quoted, by intelligence,
The names of all notorious offenders
Lurking about the Citty— MON. Sir I do;

And some there are which call it my blacke booke:
Well may the title hold: for though it teach not
The Art of conjuring, yet in it lurke
The names of many devils. FRAN. Pray let's see it.
MON. I'le fetch it to your Lordship.
FRA. *Monticelso,* *Exit Monticelso.*
I'le not trust thee, but in all my plots
I'le rest as jealous as a Towne besieg'd.
Thou canst not reach what I intend to act.
Your flax soone kindles, soone is out againe,
But gold slow heat's, and long will hot remaine. *Enter Mont.*
MON. 'Tis here my Lord. [*presents Fra. with a booke*].
FRA. First your Intelligencers pray let's see.
MON. Their number rises strangely,
And some of them
You'd take for honest men.
Next are Pandars.
These are your Pirats: and these following leaves,
For base rogues that undo yong Gentlemen
By taking up commodities: for pollitick bankroupts:
For fellowes that are bawdes to their owne wives,
Onely to put off horses and slight jewels,
Clockes, defac't plate, and such commodities,
At birth of their first children. FRA. Are there such?
MON. These are for Impudent baudes,
That go in mens apparell: for usurers
That share with scriveners for their good reportage:
For Lawyers that will antedate their writtes:
And some Divines you might find foulded there;
But that I slip them o're for conscience sake.
Here is a generall catalogue of knaves.
A man might study all the prisons o're,
Yet never attaine this knowledge. FRA. Murderers.
Fould downe the leafe I pray,
Good my Lord let me borrow this strange doctrine.
MON. Pray use't my Lord.
FRAN. I do assure your Lordship,
You are a worthy member of the State,
And have done infinite good in your discovery
Of these offendors. MON. Some-what Sir. FRA. O God!

Better then tribute of wolves paid in *England.*
'Twill hang their skinnes o'th hedge.
MON. I must make bold
To leave your Lord-ship. FRA. Deerely, sir, I thanke you,
If any aske for me at Court, report
You have left me in the company of knaves. *Exit Mont.*
I gather now by this, some cunning fellow
That's my Lords Officer, [one] that lately skipt
From a Clerkes deske up to a Justice chaire,
Hath made this knavish summons; and intendes,
As th'Irish rebels wont were to sell heads,
So to make prize of these. And thus it happens,
Your poore rogues pay for't, which have not the meanes
To present bribe in fist: the rest o'th'band
Are raz'd out of the knaves record; or else
My Lord he winkes at them with easy will,
His man growes rich, the knaves are the knaves still.
But to the use I'le make of it; it shall serve
To point me out a li[st] of murderers,
Agents for any villany. Did I want
Ten leash of Curtisans, it would furnish me;
Nay lawndresse three Armies. That [in] so little paper
Should [lie] th'undoing of so many men!
'Tis not so big as twenty declarations.
See the corrupted use some make of bookes:
Divinity, wrested by some factious bloud,
Draws swords, swels battels, & orethrowes all good.
To fashion my revenge more seriously,
Let me remember my dead sisters face:
[Call] for her picture: no; I'le close mine eyes,
And in a melancholicke thought I'le frame
Enter Isabel[l]a's Ghost.
Her figure 'fore me. Now I —d' foot how strong
Imagination workes! how she can frame
Things which are not! me thinks she stands afore me;
And by the quicke Idea of my minde,
Were my skill pregnant, I could draw her picture.
Thought, as a subtile Jugler, makes us deeme
Things, supernaturall, which have cause
Common as sickenesse. 'Tis my melancholy—

How cam'st thou by thy death?——how idle am I
To question mine owne idlenesse!...did ever
Man dreame awake till now?...remove this object—
Out of my braine with't! what have I to do
With tombes, or death-beds, funerals, or teares,
That have to meditate upon revenge? [*Exit Ghost.*]
So now 'tis ended, like an old wives story.
States-men thinke often they see stranger sights
Then mad-men. Come, to this waighty businesse.
My Tragedy must have some idle mirth in't,
Else it will never passe. I am in love,
In love with *Corombona;* and my suite
Thus haltes to her in verse.—— *he writes.*
I have done it rarely: ô the fate of Princes!
I am so us'd to frequent flattery,
That being alone I now flatter my selfe;
But it will serve, 'tis seal'd; beare this *Enter servant.*
To th'house of Convertites; and watch your leisure
To give it to the hands of *Corombona,*
Or to the Matron, when some followers
Of *Brachiano* may be by. Away— *Exit servant.*
He that deales all by strength, his wit is shallow:
When a mans head goes through each limbe will follow.
The engine for my busines, bold Count *Lodowicke*...
'Tis gold must such an instrument procure,
With empty fist no man doth falcons lure.
Brachiano, I am now fit for thy encounter.
Like the wild Irish I'le nere thinke thee dead,
Till I can play at footeball with thy head.
Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo. *Exit.*

[SCENE II.]

[*Hall of the House of Convertites.*]

Enter the Matron, and Flamineo.

MAT. Should it be knowne the Duke hath such recourse
To your imprison'd sister, I were like
T'incur much damage by it. FLA. Not a scruple.
The Pope lies on his death-bed, and their heads

Are troubled now with other businesse
Than guarding of a Ladie. *Enter servant.*
SER. [*aside*] Yonder's *Flamineo* in conference
With the Matrona. [*to the Matrona*] Let mee speake with you.
I would intreat you to deliver for mee
This letter to the faire *Vittoria.*
MAT. I shall Sir. *Enter Brachiano.*
SER. With all care and secrecie—
Hereafter you shall know mee, and receive
Thankes for this curtesie. FLA. How now? what's that?
[*Exit servant.*]
MAT. A letter. FLA. To my sister: Ile see't delivered.
BRA. What's that you read *Flamineo*? FLA. Looke.
BRA. Ha? To the most unfortunate his best respected *Vittoria.*
Who was the messenger? FLA. I know not.
BRA. No! Who sent it?
FLA. Ud's foot you speake, as if a man
Should know what foule is coffind in a bak't meate
Afore you cut it up.
BRA. Ile open't, were't her heart. What's heere subscribed?
Florence? This jugling is grosse and palpable.
I have found out the conveyance; read it, read it.
FLA. *Your teares Ile turne to triumphes, bee but mine.* *Reades*
Your prop is fall'n; I pittie that a vine *the letter.*
Which Princes heretofore have long'd to gather,
Wanting supporters, now should fade and wither.
Wine yfaith, my Lord, with lees would serve his turne.
Your sad imprisonement Ile soone uncharme,
And with a princelie uncontrolled arme
Lead you to Florence, where my love and care
Shall hang your wishes in my silver haire.
A halter on his strange æquivocation!
Nor for my yeares returne mee the sad willow—
Who prefer blossomes before fruit that's mellow?
Rotten on my knowledge with lying too long i'th bed-straw.
And all the lines of age this line convinces:
The Gods never wax old, no more doe Princes.
A pox on't—teare it, let's have no more Atheists
For Gods sake.

BRA. Udsdeath, Ile cut her into Atomies
And let th'irregular North-winde sweepe her up
And blow her int' his nosthrils. Where's this whore?
FLA. What? what doe you call her?
BRA. Oh, I could bee mad,
Prevent the curst disease shee'l bring mee to;
And teare my haire off. Where's this changeable stuffe?
FLA. Ore head and eares in water, I assure you,
Shee is not for your wearing. BRA. In you Pandar!
FLA. What mee, my Lord, am I your dog?
BRA. A bloud-hound: doe you brave? doe you stand mee?
FLA. Stand you? let those that have diseases run;
I need no plaisters. BRA. Would you bee kickt?
FLA. Would you have your necke broke?
I tell you Duke, I am not in Russia;
My shinnes must be kept whole. BRA. Do you know mee?
FLA. O my Lord! methodically.
As in this world there are degrees of evils:
So in this world there are degrees of devils.
You'r a great Duke; I your poore secretarie.
I doe looke now for a Spanish fig, or an Italian sallet daily.
BRA. Pandar, plie your convoy, and leave your prating.
FLA. All your kindnesse to mee is like that miserable curtesie of *Polyphemus* to *Ulisses*, you reserve mee to be devour'd last, you would dig turves out of my grave to feed your Larkes: that would bee musicke to you. Come, Ile lead you to her.
[*Flamineo retreats backwards before him.*]
BRA. Do you face mee?
FLA. O sir I would not go before a Pollitique enemie with my backe towards him, though there were behind mee a whirlepoole. *Enter Vittoria to Brachiano and Flamineo.*
BRA. Can you read Mistresse? looke upon that letter;
There are no characters nor Hieroglyphicks.
You need no comment—I am growne your receiver—
Gods pretious, you shall bee a brave great Ladie,
A statelie and advanced whore. VIT. Say Sir?
BRA. Come, come, let's see your Cabinet, discover
Your treasurie of love-letters. Death and furies,
Ile see them all. VIT. Sir, upon my soule,
I have not any. Whence was this directed?

BRA. Confusion on your politicke ignorance! [*gives her the*
You are reclaimed, are you? Ile give you the bels *letter.*]
And let you flie to the devill. FLA. Ware hawke, my Lord.
VIT. Florence! This is some treacherous plot, my Lord—
To mee, he nere was [lovely] I protest,
So much as in my sleepe. BRA. Right: they are plots.
Your beautie! ô, ten thousand curses on't.
How long have I beheld the devill in christall!
Thou hast lead mee, like an heathen sacrifice,
With musicke, and with fatall yokes of flowers
To my eternall ruine. Woman to man
Is either a God or a wolfe. VIT. My Lord. BRA. Away.
We'll bee as differing as two Adamants;
The one shall shunne the other. What? do'st weepe?
Procure but ten of thy dissembling trade,
[W]ee'ld furnish all the Irish funeralls
With howling, past wild Irish. FLA. Fie, my Lord.
BRA. That hand, that cursed hand, which I have wearied
With doting kisses! O my sweetest Dutchesse
How lovelie art thou now! [*to Vittoria*] Thy loose thoughtes
Scatter like quicke-silver, I was bewitch'd;
For all the world speakes ill of thee. VIT. No matter.
Ile live so now Ile make that world recant
And change her speeches. You did name your Dutchesse.
BRA. Whose death God pardon.
VIT. Whose death God revenge
On thee most godlesse Duke. FLA. Now for [two] whirlewindes.
VIT. What have I gain'd by thee but infamie?
Thou hast stain'd the spotlesse honour of my house,
And frighted thence noble societie:
Like those, which sicke o'th' Palsie, and retaine
Ill-senting foxes 'bout them, are still shun'd
By those of choicer nosthrills. What doe you call this house?
Is this your palace? did not the Judge stile it
A house of penitent whores? who sent mee to it?
Who hath the honour to advance *Vittoria*
To this incontinent colledge? is 't not you?
Is 't not your high preferment? Go, go brag
How many Ladies you have undone, like mee.
Fare you well Sir; let me heare no more of you.

I had a limbe corrupted to an ulcer,
But I have cut it off: and now Ile go
Weeping to heaven on crutches. For your giftes,
I will returne them all; and I do wish
That I could make you full Executor
To all my sinnes—ô that I could tosse my selfe
Into a grave as quickly: for all thou art worth
Ile not shed one teare more;——Ile burst first. *She throwes her*
BRA. I have drunke Lethe. *selfe upon a bed.*
Vittoria! My dearest happinesse! *Vittoria!*
What doe you aile my Love? why doe you weepe?
VIT. Yes, I now weepe poniardes, doe you see?
BRA. Are not those matchlesse eies mine? VIT. I had rather
They were not matches. BRA. Is not this lip mine?
VIT. Yes: thus to bite it off, rather than give it thee.
FLA. Turne to my Lord, good sister.
VIT. Hence you Pandar.
FLA. Pandar! Am I the author of your sinne?
VIT. Yes: Hee's a base theif that a theif lets in.
FLA. Wee're blowne up, my Lord—
BRA. Wilt thou heare mee?
Once to bee jealous of thee is t'expresse
That I will love thee everlastingly,
And never more bee jealous. VIT. O thou foole,
Whose greatnesse hath by much oregrowne thy wit!
What dar'st thou doe, that I not dare to suffer,
Excepting to bee still thy whore? for that...
In the seas bottome sooner thou shalt make
A bonefire. FLA. O, no othes for gods sake!
BRA. Will you heare mee? VIT. Never.
FLA. What a damn'd impostume is a womans will!
Can nothing breake it? [*aside*] fie, fie, my Lord.
Women are caught as you take Tortoises,
Shee must bee turn'd on her backe. [*to Vittoria*] Sister, by this hand
I am on your side. Come, come, you have wrong'd her
What a strange credulous man were you, my Lord,
To thinke the Duke of Florence would love her!
Will any Mercer take anothers ware
When once 't is tows'd and sullied? And yet, sister,
How scurvily this frowardnesse becomes you!

Yong Leverets stand not long; and womens anger
Should, like their flight, procure a little sport;
A full crie for a quarter of an hower;
And then bee put to th' dead quat. BRA. Shall these eies,
Which have so long time dwelt upon your face,
Be now put out? FLA. No cruell Land-ladie i'th' world,
Which lend's forth grotes to broome-men, & takes use for them,
Would doe't.
Hand her, my Lord, and kisse her: be not like
A ferret to let go your hold with blowing.
BRA. Let us renew right handes. VIT. Hence!
BRA. Never shall rage, or the forgetfull wine,
Make mee commit like fault.
FLA. Now you are ith' way on't, follow 't hard.
BRA. Bee thou at peace with mee; let all the world
Threaten the Cannon. FLA. Marke his penitence.
Best natures doe commit the grossest faultes,
When they're giv'n ore to jealosie; as best wine
Dying makes strongest vinneger. Ile tell you;
The Sea's more rough and raging than calme rivers,
But nor so sweet nor wholesome. A quiet woman
Is a still water under a great bridge.
A man may shoot her safely.
VIT. O yee dissembling men! FLA. Wee suckt that, sister,
From womens brestes, in our first infancie.
VIT. To ad miserie to miserie. BRA. Sweetest!
VIT. Am I not low enough?
I, I, your good heart gathers like a snow-ball
Now your affection's cold. FLA. Ud'foot, it shall melt
To a hart againe, or all the wine in Rome
Shall run o'th lees for't.
VIT. Your dog or hawke should be rewarded better
Then I have bin. Ile speake not one word more.
FLA. Stop her mouth, with a sweet kisse, my Lord
So—now the tide's turned the vessel's come about.
Hee's a sweet armefull. O wee curl'd-haird men
Are still most kind to women. This is well.
BRA. That you should chide thus!
FLA. O, sir, your little chimnies
Doe ever cast most smoke. I swet for you.

Couple together with as deepe a silence,
As did the Grecians in their wodden horse.
My Lord supplie your promises with deedes.
You know that painted meat no hunger feedes.
BRA. [Stay—ingratefull Rome!] FLA. Rome! it deserves
To be cal'd Barbarie, for our villainous usage.
BRA. Soft; the same project which the Duke of Florence,
(Whether in love or gullerie I know not)
Laid downe for her escape, will I pursue.
FLA. And no time fitter than this night, my Lord;
The Pope being dead; and all the Cardinals entred
The Conclave for th' electing a new Pope;
The Cittie in a great confusion;
Wee may attire her in a Pages suit,
Lay her post-horse, take shipping, and amaine
For Padua.
BRA. Ile instantly steale forth the Prince *Giovanni*,
And make for Padua. You two with your old Mother
And yong *Marcello* that attendes on Florence,
If you can worke him to it, follow mee.
I will advance you all: for you *Vittoria*,
Thinke of a Dutchesse title. FLA. Lo you sister!
Stay, my Lord; I'le tell you a tale. The crocodile, which lives in the river *Nilus*, hath a worme breds i'th teeth of't, which puts it to extreame anguish: a little bird, no bigger then a wren, is barbor-surgeon to this crocodile; flies into the jawes of't; pickes out the worme; and brings present remedy. The fish, glad of ease but ingratefull to her that did it, that the bird may not talke largely of her abroad for non-payment, closeth her chaps intending to swallow her, and so put her to perpetuall silence. But nature loathing such ingratitude, hath arm'd this bird with a quill or pricke on the head, top o'th which wounds the crocodile i'th mouth; forceth her open her bloudy prison; and away flies the pretty tooth-picker from her cruell patient.
BRAC. Your application is, I have not rewarded
The service you have done me. FLAM. No, my Lord;
You sister are the crocodile: you are blemisht in your fame, My Lord cures it. And though the comparison hold not in every particle; yet observe, remember, what good the bird with the pricke i'th head hath done you; and scorne ingratitude.

It may appeare to some ridiculous [*aside*]
Thus to talke knave and madman; and sometimes
Come in with a dried sentence, stuft with sage.
But this allowes my varying of shapes,
Knaves do grow great by being great mens apes. *Exeunt.*

[SCENE III.]

[*Without the Vatican.*]

Enter Lodovico, Gasper, *and sixe Embassadours. At another dore the Duke of Florence.*

FRA. So, my Lord, I commend your diligence—
Guard well the conclave, and, as the order is,
Let none have conference with the Cardinals.
LOD. I shall, my Lord: roome for the Embassadors—
GAS. They're wondrous brave to-day: why do they weare
These severall habits? LOD. O sir, they'r Knights
Of severall Orders.
That Lord i'th blacke cloak with the silver crosse
Is Knight of *Rhodes*; the next, Knight of S. *Michael*;
That, of the golden fleece; the *French-man* there,
Knight of the Holy-Ghost; my Lord of *Savoy*,
Knight of th'Annuntiation; the *Englishman*
Is Knight of th'honoured Garter, dedicated
Unto their Saint, S. *George*. I could describe to you
Their severall institutions, with the lawes
Annexed to their Orders; but that time
Permits not such discovery.
FRAN. Where's Count *Lodowicke*?
LOD. Here my Lord. FRA. 'Tis o'th point of dinner time,
Marshall the Cardinals service— LOD. Sir I shall. *Enter servants with severall dishes covered.*
Stand, let me search your dish, who's this for?
SER. For my Lord Cardinall *Monticelso.*
LOD. [Who's] this...?
SER. For my Lord Cardinall of *Burbon.*
FRE. [EMB.] Why doth he search the dishes—to observe
What meate is drest? ENG. [EMB.] No Sir, but to prevent,
Least any letters should be convei'd in
To bribe or to sollicite the advancement

Of any Cardinall—when first they enter
'Tis lawfull for the Embassadours of Princes
To enter with them, and to make their suit
For any man their Prince affecteth best;
But after, till a generall election,
No man may speake with them.
LOD. You that attend on the Lord Cardinals
Open the window, and receive their viands.
A CAR. You must returne the service; the L. Cardinals
Are busied 'bout electing of the Pope,
They have given o're scrutinie, and are fallen
To admiration. LOD. Away, away.
FRAN. I'le lay a thousand Duckets you here news *A Card-*
Of a Pope presently—Hearke; sure he's elected, *inal on the*
Behold! my Lord of *Arragon* appeares, *Tarras.*
On the Church battlements.
ARRAGON. *Denuntio vobis gaudium magnum. Reverendissimus Cardinalis* Lorenso *de* Monticelso *electus est in sedem Apostolicam, & elegit sibi nomen* Paulum *quartum.*
OMNES. *Vivat sanctus Pater* Paulus *Quartus.* [*Enter Servant.*]
SER. *Vittoria* my Lord—
FRAN. Wel: what of her? SER. Is fled the Citty— FRA. Ha?
SER. With Duke *Brachiano.* FRA. Fled? Where's the Prince *Giovanni*?
SER. Gone with his father.
FRAN. Let the Matrona of the Convertites
Be apprehended: fled—ô damnable! [*Exit Servant.*]
How fortunate are my wishes. Why? 'twas this
I onely laboured. I did send the letter
T'instruct him what to doe. Thy fame, fond Duke,
I first have poison'd; directed thee the way
To marrie a whore; what can be worse? This followes.
The hand must act to drowne the passionate tongue,
I scorne to weare a sword and prate of wrong.

Enter Monticelso in state.

MON. *Concedimus vobis Apostolicam benedictionem & remissionem peccatorum.* [*Francisco whispers to him.*]
My Lord reportes *Vittoria Corombona*
Is stol'ne from forth the house of Convertites

By *Brachiano*, and they're fled the Cittie.
Now, though this bee the first daie of our seate,
Wee cannot better please the divine power,
Than to sequester from the holie Church
These cursed persons. Make it therefore knowne,
Wee doe denounce excommunication
Against them both: all that are theirs in Rome
Wee likewise banish. Set on. *Exeunt [all except Francisco and Lodovico].*
FRAN. Come deare *Lodovico*.
You have tane the sacrament to prosecute
Th'intended murder? LOD. With all constancie.
But, Sir, I wonder you'l ingage your selfe,
In person, being a great Prince. FRAN. Divert mee not.
Most of his Court are of my faction,
And some are of my councell. Noble freind,
Our danger shall be 'like in this designe,
Give leave, part of the glorie may bee mine.
Exit Fran. Enter Monticelso.
MON. Why did the Duke of Florence with such care
Labour your pardon? say.
LOD. Italian beggars will resolve you that
Who, begging of an almes, bid those they beg of
Doe good for their owne sakes; or't may bee
Hee spreades his bountie with a sowing hand,
Like Kinges, who many times give out of measure;
Not for desert so much as for their pleasure.
MON. I know you're cunning. Come, what devill was that
That you were raising? LOD. Devill, my Lord? [MONT.] I aske you.
How doth the Duke imploy you, that his bonnet
Fell with such complement unto his knee,
When hee departed from you? LOD. Why, my Lord,
Hee told mee of a restie Barbarie horse
Which he would faine have brought to the carreere,
The 'sault, and the ring galliard. Now, my Lord,
I have a rare French Rider. MONT. Take you heede:
Least the Jade breake your necke. Doe you put mee off
With your wild horse-trickes? Sirra you doe lie.
O, thou 'rt a foule blacke cloud, and thou do'st threat
A violent storme. LOD. Stormes are i'th aire, my Lord;

I am too low to storme. MONT. Wretched creature!
I know that thou art fashion'd for all ill,
Like dogges, that once get bloud, they'l ever kill.
About some murder? was't not? LOD. Ile not tell you;
And yet I care not greatly if I doe;
Marry with this preparation. Holie father,
I come not to you as an Intelligencer,
But as a penitent sinner. What I utter
Is in confession meerely; which you know
Must never bee reveal'd. MONT. You have oretane mee.
LOD. Sir I did love *Brachiano's* Dutchesse deerely;
Or rather I pursued her with hot lust,
Though shee nere knew on't. Shee was poyson'd;
Upon my soule shee was: for which I have sworne
T'avenge her murder. MONT. To the Duke of Florence?
LOD. To him I have. MON. Miserable Creature!
If thou persist in this, 't is damnable.
Do'st thou imagine thou canst slide on bloud
And not be tainted with a shamefull fall?
Or like the blacke, and melancholicke Eugh-tree,
Do'st thinke to roote thy selfe in dead mens graves,
And yet to prosper? Instruction to thee
Comes like sweet sh[o]wers to over-hardned ground:
They wet, but peirce not deepe. And so I leave thee
With all the Furies hanging bout thy necke,
Till by thy penitence thou remove this evill,
In conjuring from thy breast that cruell Devill. *Exit Mon.*
LOD. I'le give it o're. He saies 'tis dam[n]able:
Besides I did expect his suffrage, by reason
Of *Camillo's* death. *Enter servant & Francisco.*
FRA. Do you know that Count? SER. Yes, my Lord.
FRA. Beare him these thousand Duckets to his lodging;
Tell him the Pope hath sent them. Happily
That will confirme [him] more then all the rest. [*Exit.*]
SER. Sir. LOD. To me sir?
SER. His holinesse hath sent you a thousand Crownes,
And wil[s] you if you travaile, to make him
Your Patron for intelligence. LOD. His creature
Ever to be commanded. [*Exit servant.*]
Why now 'tis come about. He rail'd upon me;

And yet these Crownes were told out and laid ready,
Before he knew my voiage. O the Art,
The modest forme of greatnesse! that do sit
Like Brides at wedding dinners, with their looks turn'd
From the least wanton jests, their puling stomacke
Sicke of the modesty, when their thoughts are loose...
Even acting of those hot and lustfull sports
Are to ensue about midnight: such his cunning!
Hee soundes my depth thus with a golden plummet,
I am doubly arm'd now. Now to th'act of bloud,
There's but three furies found in spacious hell;
But in a great mans breast three thousand dwell. [*Exit.*]

[ACT V. SCENE I.]

[*Padua. Brachiano's Palace.*]

A passage over the stage of Brachiano, Flamineo, Marcello, Hortensio, Corombona, Cornelia, Zanche *and others.*
[*Flamineo, Marcello and Hortensio remain.*]

FLA. In all the weary minutes of my life,
Day nere broke up till now. This mariage
Confirmes me happy. HOR. 'Tis a good assurance.
Saw you not yet the Moore that's come to Court?
FLA. Yes, and confer'd with him i'th Dukes closet,
I have not seene a goodlier personage,
Nor ever talkt with man better experienc't
In State-affares or rudiments of warre.
Hee hath by report, serv'd the *Venetian*
In *Candy* these twice seven yeares, and bene cheife
In many a bold designe. HOR. What are those two,
That beare him company?
FLA. Two Noblemen of *Hungary*, that living in the Emperours service as commanders, eight yeares since, contrary to the expectation of all the Court entred into religion, into the strickt order of Capuchins: but being not well setled in their undertaking they left their Order and returned to Court: for which being after troubled in conscience, they vowed their service against the enemies of Christ; went to *Malta*; were there knighted; and in their returne backe, at this great solemnity, they are

resolved for ever to forsake the world, and settle themselves here in a house of Capuchines in *Padua*. Hor. 'Tis strange.

Fla. One thing makes it so. They have vowed for ever to weare next their bare bodies those coates of maile they served in.

Hor. Hard penance. Is the Moore a Christian?

Fla. Hee is.

Hor. Why proffers hee his service to our Duke?

Fla. Because he understands ther's like to grow
Some warres betweene us and the Duke of Florence,
In which hee hopes imployment.
I never saw one in a sterne bold looke
Weare more command, nor in a lofty phrase
Expresse more knowing, or more deepe contempt
Of our slight airy Courtiers. Hee talkes
As if hee had travail'd all the Princes Courts
Of Christendome; in all things strives t'expresse,
That all that should dispute with him may know,
Glories, like glow-wormes, afarre off shine bright
But lookt to neare, have neither heat nor light.
The Duke!

Enter Brachiano, Florence disguised like Mulinassar; Lodovico [disguised as Carlo], Antonelli, Gaspar [disguised as Pedro], Farnese bearing their swordes and helmets.

Bra. You'are nobly welcome. Wee have heard at full
Your honourable service 'gainst the Turke.
To you, brave *Mulinassar*, wee assigne
A competent pension: and are inly sorr[ie],
The vowes of those two worthie gentlemen,
Make them incapable of our proffer'd bountie.
Your wish is you may leave your warlike swordes
For Monuments in our Chappell. I accept it
As a great honour done mee, and must crave
Your leave to furnish out our Dutchesse revells.
Onely one thing—as the last vanitie
You ere shall view, denie mee not to stay
To see a Barriers prepar'd to-night;
You shall have private standings: It hath pleas'd
The great Ambassadours of severall Princes
In their returne from Rome to their owne Countries

To grace our marriage, and to honour mee
With such a kind of sport. FRAN. I shall perswade them
To stay, my Lord.
[BRA.] Set on there to the presence.
Exeunt Brachiano, Flamineo, [Hortensio], and Marcello.
[LOD.] Noble my Lord, most fortunately wellcome,
The Conspirators here imbrace.
You have our vowes seal'd with the sacrament
To second your attempts. [GAS.] And all thinges readie.
Hee could not have invented his owne ruine,
Had hee despair'd, with more proprietie.
LOD. You would not take my way. FRA. 'Tis better ordered.
LOD. T'have poison'd his praier booke, or a paire of beades,
The pummell of his saddle, his looking-glasse,
Or th'handle of his racket—ô that, that!
That while he had bin bandying at Tennis,
He might have sworne himselfe to hell, and strooke
His soule into the hazzard! O my Lord!
I would have our plot bee ingenious,
And have it hereafter recorded for example
Rather than borrow example. FRAN. There's no way
More speeding than this thought on. LOD. On then.
FRAN. And yet mee thinkes that this revenge is poore,
Because it steales upon him like a theif—
To have tane him by the Caske in a pitcht feild,
Led him to Florence! LOD. It had bin rare.——And there
Have crown'd him with a wreath of stinking garlicke,
T'have showne the sharpnesse of his government;
And rancknesse of his lust.
Flamineo comes. *Exeunt Lodovico, Antonelli, [and Gasparo].*

Enter Flamineo, Marcello, and Zanche.

MAR. Why doth this devill haunt you? say.
FLA. I know not.
For by this light I doe not conjure for her.
Tis not so great a cunning as men thinke
To raise the devill: for heeres one up allreadie,
The greatest cunning were to lay him downe.
MAR. Shee is your shame. FLA. I prethee pardon her.
In faith you see, women are like to burres;

Where their affection throwes them, there they'l sticke.
ZAN. That is my Country-man, a goodly person;
When hee's at leisure Ile discourse with him
In our owne language. FLA. I beseech you doe— *Exit*
How is't brave souldier? ô that I had seene *Zanche.*
Some of your iron daies! I pray relate
Some of your service to us.

FRAN. 'Tis a ridiculous thing for a man to bee his owne Chronicle—I did never wash my mouth with mine owne praise for feare of getting a stincking breath.

MAR. You're too Stoicall. The Duke will expect other discourse from you.

FRAN. I shall never flatter him, I have studied man to[o] much to do that: What difference is betweene the Duke and I? no more than betweene two brickes: all made of one clay. Onely 't may bee one is plac't on the top of a turret; the other in the bottom of a well by meere chance; if I were plac't as high as the Duke, I should sticke as fast; make as faire a shew; and beare out weather equally.

FLA. [*aside*] If this souldier had a patent to beg in Churches, then hee would tell them stories— MAR. I have bin a souldier too.

FRAN. How have you thriv'd? MAR. Faith poorely.

FRAN. That's the miserie of peace. Onely outsides are then respected: As shippes seeme verie great upon the river, which shew verie little upon the Seas: So some men i'th Court seeme *Colossusses* in a chamber, who if they came into the feild would appeare pittifull Pigmies.

FLA. Give mee a faire roome, yet hung with Arras, and some great Cardinall to lug mee by th' eares as his endeared Minion.

FRA. And thou maist doe—the devill knowes what vilanie.

FLA. And safely.

FRA. Right; you shall see in the Countrie in harvest time, pigeons, though they destroy never so much corne, the farmer dare not present the fowling peece to them! why? because they belong to the Lord of the Mannor; whilest your poore sparrowes that belong to the Lord of heaven, they go to the pot for't.

FLA. I will now give you some polliticke instruction. The Duke saies hee will give you pension; that's but bare promise: get it under his hand. For I have knowne men that have come

from serving against the Turke; for three or foure moneths they have had pension to buy them new woodden legges and fresh plaisters; but after 'twas not to bee had. And this miserable curtesie shewes, as if a Tormenter should give hot cordiall drinkes to one three quarters dead o'th' racke, onely to fetch the miserable soule againe to indure more dogdaies. [*Exit Francisco.*] *Enter Hortensio, a yong Lord, Zanche, and two more.*

How now, Gallants; what, are they readie for the Barriers?

Y. Lord. Yes: the Lordes are putting on their armour.

Hor. What's hee?

Fla. A new up-start: one that sweares like a Falckner, and will lye in the Dukes eare day by day like a maker of Almanacks; And yet I knew him since hee came to th' Court smell worse of sweat than an under-tennis-court-keeper.

Hor. Looke you, yonder's your sweet Mistresse.

Fla. Thou art my sworne brother, I'le tell thee, I doe love that Moore, that Witch very constrainedly: shee knowes some of my villanny; I do love her, just as a man holds a wolfe by the eares. But for feare of turning upon mee, and pulling out my throate, I would let her go to the Devill.

Hor. I heare she claimes marriage of thee.

Fla. 'Faith, I made to her some such darke promise, and in seeking to flye from't I run on, like a frighted dog with a bottle at's taile, that faine would bite it off and yet dares not looke behind him. Now my pretious Gipsie!

Zan. I, your love to me rather cooles then heates.

Fla. Marry, I am the sounder lover, we have many wenches about the Towne heate too fast.

Hor. What do you thinke of these perfum'd Gallants then?

Flam. Their fattin cannot save them. I am confident
They have a certaine spice of the disease,
For they that sleep with dogs; shall rise with fleas.

Zan. Beleeve it! A little painting and gay clothes
Make you loath me.

Fla. How? love a Lady for painting or gay apparell? I'le unkennell one example more for thee. *Esop* had a foolish dog that let go the flesh to catch the shadow. I would have Courtiers bee better *Di[n]ers*. Zan. You remember your oathes?

Fla. Lovers oathes are like Marriners prayers, uttered in extremity; but when the tempest is o're, and that the vessell leaves

tumbling, they fall from protesting to drinking. And yet amongst Gentlemen protesting and drinking go together, and agree as well as Shooemakers and West-phalia bacon. They are both drawers on: for drinke drawes on protestation; and protestation drawes on more drinke. Is not this discourse better now then the mo[r]ality of your sun-burnt Gentleman? *Enter Cornelia.*

COR. Is this your pearch, you haggard? flye to'th stewes.
[*Strikes Zanche.*]

FLA. You should be clapt by th'heeles now: strike i'th Court!
[*Exit Cornelia.*]

ZAN. She's good for nothing but to make her maids
Catch cold a nights; they dare not use a bedstaffe,
For feare of her light fingers. MAR. You're a strumpet.
[*Kicks Zanche.*]
An impudent one. FLA. Why do you kicke her? say—
Do you thinke that she's like a walnut-tree?
Must she be cudgel'd ere shee beare good fruite?

MAR. Shee brags that you shall marry her. FLA. What then?

MAR. I had rather she were pitcht upon a stake
In some new-seeded garden, to affright
Her fellow crowes thence. FLA. You['re] a boy, a foole,
Be guardian to your hound; I am of age.

MAR. If I take her neere you I'le cut her throate.

FLA. With a fan of feathers? MAR. And for you . . . I'le whip
This folly from you. FLAM. Are you cholericke?
I'le purg't with Rubarbe. HOR. O your brother! FLA. Hang him!
Hee wrongs me most that ought t'offend mee least—
I do suspect my mother plaid foule play,
When she conceiv'd thee. MAR. Now by all my hopes,
Like the two slaughtred sonnes of *Oedipus*,
The very flames of our affection,
Shall turne [two] waies. Those words I'le make thee answere
With thy heart bloud. FLA. Doe like the geesse in the progresse,
You know where you shall finde mee— [*Exit.*] MAR. Very good,
And thou beest a noble, friend, beare him my sword,
And bid him fit the length on't. Y. LORD. Sir I shall.
[*Exeunt, except Zanche.*]

ZAN. [*aside*] He comes. Hence petty thought of my disgrace!—
I neere lov'd my complexion till now, *Enter Francisco the*
Cause I may boldly say without a blush, *Duke of Florence.*

I love you. F[R]A. Your love is untimely sowen,
Ther's a Spring at Michaelmas, but 'tis but a faint one, I am
sunck in yeares, and I have vowed never to marry.

ZAN. Alas! poore maides get more lovers then husbands—
Yet you may mistake my wealth. For, as when Embassadours are sent to congratulate Princes, there's commonly sent along with them a rich present; so that though the Prince like not the Embassadours person nor words, yet he likes well of the present-ment. So I may come to you in the same maner, & be better loved for my dowry then my vertue. F[R]A. I'le thinke on the motion.

ZAN. Do, I'le now detaine you no longer. At your better leasure I'le tell you things shall startle your bloud.
Nor blame me that this passion I reveale;
Lovers dye inward that their flames conceale.

F[R]A. [*aside*] Of all intelligence this may prove the best,
Sure I shall draw strange fowle, from this foule nest. *Exeunt.*

[SCENE II.]

[*The Same.*]

Enter Marcello and Cornelia.

COR. I heare a whispering all about the Court,
[You] are to fight, who is your opposite?
What is the quarrell? MAR. 'Tis an idle rumour.

COR. Will you dissemble? sure you do not well
To fright me thus—you never look thus pale,
But when you are most angry. I do charge you
Upon my blessing; nay I'le call the Duke,
And he shall schoole you. MAR. Publish not a feare
Which would convert to laughter; 'tis not so—
Was not this Crucifix my fathers? COR. Yes.

MAR. I have heard you say, giving my brother sucke,
Hee tooke the Crucifix betweene his hands, *Enter Flamineo.*
And broke a limbe off. COR. Yes: but 'tis mended.

FLA. I have brought your weapon backe. *Flamineo runnes*
COR. Ha, O my horrour! *Marcello through.*
MAR. You have brought it home indeed.
COR. Helpe, oh he's murdered.

FLA. Do you turne your gaule up? I'le to sanctuary, [*Exit*
And send a surgeon to you. HOR. How? o'th ground? *Flam.*]

MAR. O mother now remember what I told, *Enter Hort.*
Of breaking off the Crucifix: farewell— [*Lod. Gasp.*]
There are some sinnes which heaven doth duly punish,
In a whole family. This it is to rise
By all dishonest meanes. Let all men know
That tree shall long time keepe a steddy foote
Whose branches spread no [wider] then the roote. [*Dies.*]

COR. O my perpetuall sorrow! HOR. Vertuous *Marcello.*
Hee's dead: pray leave him Lady; come, you shall.

COR. Alas he is not dead: hee's in a trance.
Why here's no body shall get any thing by his death. Let me call him againe for Gods sake. [LOD.] I would you were deceiv'd.

COR. O you abuse mee, you abuse me, you abuse me. How many have gone away thus for lacke of tendance; reare up's head, reare up's head; His bleeding inward will kill him.

HOR. You see hee is departed.

COR. Let mee come to him; give mee him as hee is, if hee bee turn'd to earth; let mee but give him one heartie kisse, and you shall put us both into one coffin: fetch a looking-glasse, see if his breath will not staine it; or pull out some feathers from my pillow, and lay them to his lippes—will you loose him for a little paines-taking? HOR. Your kindest office is to pray for him.

COR. Alas! I would not pray for him yet. Hee may live to lay mee ith' ground, and pray for mee, if you'l let mee come to him. *Enter Brachiano all armed, save the beaver, with Flamineo,* [*Page, & Francisco*].

BRA. Was this your handy-worke?

FLA. It was my misfortune.

COR. Hee lies, hee lies, hee did not kill him: these have kill'd him, that would not let him bee better look't to.

BRA. Have comfort my greiv'd Mother.

COR. O you scritch-owle! HOR. Forbeare, good Madam.

COR. Let mee goe, let mee goe. *Shee runes to Flamineo with her knif drawne and comming to him lets it fall.*
The God of heaven forgive thee. Do'st not wonder
I pray for thee? Ile tell thee what's the reason,
I have scarce breath to number twentie minutes;
Ide not spend that in cursing. Fare thee well,
Halfe of thy selfe lies there: and maist thou live
To fill an howre-glasse with his mouldred ashes,
To tell how thou shouldst spend the time to come

In blest repentance. BRA. Mother, pray tell mee
How came hee by his death? what was the quarrell?
COR. Indeed my yonger boy presum'd too much
Upon his manhood; gave him bitter wordes;
Drew his sword first; and so I know not how,
For I was out of my wits, hee fell with's head
Just in my bosome. PAGE. This is not trew Madam.
COR. [*aside*] I pray thee peace.
One arrow's graz'd allready; it were vaine
T'lose this: for that will nere bee found againe.
BRA. Go, beare the bodie to *Cornelia's* lodging:
And wee commaund that none acquaint our Dutchesse
With this sad accident: for you *Flamineo*,
Hearke you, I will not graunt your pardon. FLA. No?
BRA. Onely a lease of your life. And that shall last
But for one day. Thou shalt be forc't each evening
To renew it, or be hang'd. FLA. At your pleasure.
Lodovico sprinckles Brachiano's bever with a poison.
Your will is law now—Ile not meddle with it.
BRA. You once did brave mee in your sisters lodging;
I'le now keepe you in awe for't. Where's our beaver?
FRAN. [*aside*] Hee cals for his destruction. Noble youth,
I pitty thy sad fate. Now to the barriers.
This shall his passage to the blacke lake further,
The last good deed hee did, he pardon'd murther. *Exeunt.*

[SCENE III.]

[*The Same.*]

Charges and shoutes—They fight at Barriers;
first single paires, then three to three.
Enter Brachiano, [*Francisco*] *&* *Flamineo with others.*

BRA. An Armorer! uds' death an Armorer!
FLA. Armorer; where's the Armorer?
BRA. Teare off my beaver. FLA. Are you hurt, my Lord?
BRA. O my braine's on fire, *Enter Armorer.*
The helmet is poison'd. ARM. My Lord upon my soule—
BRA. Away with him to torture.
There are some great ones that have hand in this, [*Enter Vitt.*]

And neere about me. VIT. O my loved Lord, poisoned?
FLA. Remove the barre: heer's unfortunate rev[e]ls,
Call the Physitions; a plague upon you; *Ent. 2 Physitians.*
Wee have to[o] much of your cunning here already.
I feare the Embassadours are likewise poyson'd.
BRA. Oh I am gone already: the infection
Flies to the braine and heart. O thou strong heart!
There's such a covenant 'tweene the world and it, [*Enter Giov.*]
They're loath to breake. GIO. O my most loved father!
BRA. Remove the boy away,
Where's this good woman? had I infinite worlds
They were too little for thee. Must I leave thee?
What say yon scritch-owles, is the venomne mortall?
PHYS. Most deadly. BRA. Most corrupted pollitick hangman!
You kill without booke; but your art to save
Failes you as oft, as great mens needy friends.
I that have given life to offending slaves
And wretched murderers, have I not power
To lengthen mine owne a twelve-month?
Do not kisse me, for I shall poyson thee. [*To Vittoria.*]
This unction is sent from the great Duke of Florence.
FRA. Sir bee of comfort.
BRA. O thou soft naturall death, that art joint-twin
To sweetest slumber: no rough-bearded Comet,
Stares on thy milde departure: the dull Owle
Beates not against thy casement: the hoarse wolfe
Sents not thy carion. Pitty windes thy coarse,
Whilst horrour waights on Princes. VIT. I am lost for ever.
BRAC. How miserable a thing it is to die, [*Enter Lod. & Gasp.*]
'Mongst women howling! What are those? FLA. *Franciscans.*
They have brought the extreame unction.
BRA. On paine of death, let no man name death to me,
It is a word infinitely terrible—
Withdraw into our Cabinet. *Exeunt but Francisco and Flamineo.*
FLA. To see what solitarinesse is about dying Princes! As heretofore they have unpeopled Townes; divorst friends, and made great houses unhospitable: so now, ô justice! where are their flatterers now? Flatterers are but the shadowes of Princes bodies, the least thicke cloud makes them invisible.
FRA. There's great moane made for him.

FLA. 'Faith, for some few howers salt water will runne most plentifully in every Office o'th Court. But beleeve it; most of them do but weepe over their step-mothers graves.

FRA. How meane you?

FLA. Why? They dissemble, as some men doe that live within compasse o'th verge.

FRA. Come you have thriv'd well under him.

FLA. 'Faith, like a wolfe in a womans breast; I have beene fed with poultry; but for money, understand me, I had as good a will to cosen him, as e're an Officer of them all. But I had not cunning enough to doe it.

FRAN. What did'st thou thinke of him? 'faith speake freely.

FLA. Hee was a kinde of States-man, that would sooner have reckond how many Cannon bullets he had discharged against a Towne, to count his expence that way, than how many of his valiant and deserving subjects hee lost before it.

FRAN. O, speake well of the Duke. FLA. I have done. [Wilt] heare some of my Court wisedome? *Enter Lodovico.* To reprehend Princes is dangerous: and to over-commend some of them is palpable lying. FRAN. How is it with the Duke?

LOD. Most deadly ill.
Hee's fall'n into a strange distraction.
Hee talkes of Battailes and Monopolies,
Levying of taxes, and from that descends
To the most brain-sicke language. His minde fastens
On twentie severall objects, which confound
Deepe Sence with follie. Such a fearefull end
May teach some men that beare too loftie crest,
Though they live happiest, yet they dye not best.
Hee hath conferr'd the whole State of the Dukedome
Upon your sister, till the Prince arrive
At mature age. FLA. There's some good lucke in that yet.

These speeches are severall kinds of distractions and in the action should apeare.

FRAN. See heere he comes. *Enter Brachiano, presented in a bed, Vittoria and others.* There's death in's face allready.

VIT. O my good Lord! BRA. Away, you have abus'd mee.
You have convayd coyne forth our territories;
Bought and sold offices; oppres'd the poore,
And I nere dreampt on't. Make up your accountes;
Ile now bee mine owne Steward. FLA. Sir, have patience.

BRA. Indeed I am [to] blame.

For did you ever heare the duskie raven
Chide blacknesse? or was't ever knowne, the divell
Raild against cloven Creatures? VIT. O my Lord!
BRA. Let mee have some quailes to supper. FLA. Sir, you shal.
BRA. No: some fried dog-fish. Your Quailes feed on poison—
That old dog-fox, that Polititian Florence—
Ile forsweare hunting and turne dog-killer;
Rare! Ile bee frindes with him. for marke you, sir, one dog
Still sets another a-barking: peace, peace,
Yonder's a fine slave come in now. FLA. Where?
BRA. Why there.
In a blew bonnet, and a paire of breeches
With a great codpeece. Ha, ha, ha,
Looke you his codpeece is stucke full of pinnes
With pearles o'th head of them. Doe not you know him?
FLA. No, my Lord. BRA. Why 'tis the Devill.
I know him by a great rose he weares on's shooe
To hide his cloven foot. Ile dispute with him.
Hee's a rare linguist. VIT. My Lord heer's nothing.
BRA. Nothing? rare! nothing! when I want monie,
Our treasurie is emptie; there is nothing,
Ile not bee us'd thus. VIT. O! 'ly still, my Lord.
BRA. See, see, *Flamineo* that kill'd his brother,
Is dancing on the ropes there: and he carries
A monie-bag in each hand, to keepe him even,
For feare of breaking's necke. And there's a Lawyer
In a gowne whipt with velvet, stares and gapes
When the mony will fall. How the rogue cuts capers!
It should have bin in a halter.
'Tis there; what's shee? FLA. *Vittoria*, my Lord.
BRA. Ha, ha, ha. Her haire is sprinckled with Arras powder,
That makes her looke as if she had sinn'd in the Pastrie.
What's hee? FLA. A Divine my Lord.
BRA. Hee will bee drunke: Avoid him: th' argument
Is fearefull when Church-men stagger in't.
Looke you; six gray rats that have lost their tailes,
Crall up the pillow—send for a Rat-cat[c]her.
Ile doe a miracle: Ile free the Court
From all foule vermin. Where's *Flamineo*?
FLA. I doe not like that hee names mee so often,

Brachiano seemes heare neare his end, Lodovico & Gasparoe in the habit of Capuchins, present him in his bed with a Crucifix and hallowed candle.

Especially on's death-bed: 'tis a signe
I shall not live long: see hee's neere his end.
LOD. Pray give us leave; *Attende Domine Brachiane*—
FLA. See, see, how firmely hee doth fixe his eye
Upon the Crucifix. VIT. O hold it constant.
It settles his wild spirits; and so his eies
Melt into teares.

By the Crucifix. LOD. *Domine Brachiane, solebas in bello tutus esse tuo clypeo, nùnc hunc clypeum hosti tuo opponas infernali.*

By the H[a]llowed taper. GAS. *Olim hastâ valuisti in bello; nùnc hanc sacram hastam vibrabis contra hostem animarum.*

LOD. *Attende Domine Brachiane, si nunc quòque probas ea quæ acta sunt inter nos, flecte Caput in dextrum.*

GAS. *Esto securus Domine Brachiane: cogita quantum habeas meritorum, denique memineris meam animam pro tua oppignoratam si quid esset periculi.*

LOD. *Si nùnc quoque probas ea quæ acta sunt inter nos, flecte caput in l[æ]vum.*

Hee is departing: pray stand all apart,
And let us onely whisper in his eares
Some private meditations, which our order *Heare the rest being departed Lodovico and [Gasparo] discover themselves.*
Permits you not to heare. GAS. *Brachiano!*
LOD. Devill *Brachiano*,
Thou art damn'd. GAS. Perpetually.
LOD. A slave condemn'd, and given up to the gallowes
Is thy great Lord and Master. GAS. True: for thou
Art given up to the devill. LOD. O you slave!
You that were held the famous Pollititian;
Whose art was poison. GAS. And whose conscience murder.
LOD. That would have broke your wives necke downe the staires
Ere she was poison'd. GAS. That had your villanous sallets.
LOD. And fine imbrodered bottles,
And perfumes
Equally mortall with a winter plague.
GAS. Now there's Mercarie— LOD. And copperesse—
GAS. And quicke-silver—
LOD. With other develish potticarie stuffe
A-melting in your polliticke braines: do'st heare?

GAS. This is Count *Lodovico*. LOD. This, *Gasparo*.
And thou shalt die like a poore rogue. GAS. And stinke
Like a dead flie-blowne dog.
LOD. And be forgotten before thy funerall sermon.
BRA. *Vittoria! Vittoria!* LOD. O the cursed devill,
Come to himselfe againe! Wee are undone.
Enter Vittoria and the attend[ants.]
GAS. Strangle him in private. What! will you call him againe
To live in treble torments? for charitie,
For Christian charitie, avoid the chamber. [*Exeunt.*]
LOD. You would prate, Sir. This is a true-love knot
Sent from the Duke of Florence. *Brachiano is strangled.*
GAS. What, is it done?
LOD. The snuffe is out. No woman-keeper i'th world,
Though shee had practis'd seven yere at the Pest-house,
Could have done't quaintlyer. My Lordes hee's dead.
[*Enter Vittoria, Francisco, and Flamineo.*]
OMN. Rest to his soule.
VIT. O mee! this place is hell. *Exit Vittoria.*
[FRA.] How heavily shee takes it. FLA. O yes, yes;
Had women navigable rivers in their eies
They would dispend them all; surely I wonder
Why wee should wish more rivers to the Cittie,
When they sell water so good cheape. Ile tell thee,
These are but Moonish shades of greifes or feares,
There's nothing sooner drie than womens teares.
Why heere's an end of all my harvest, hee [h]as given mee nothing.
Court promises! Let wisemen count them curst,
For while you live hee that scores best paies worst.
[FRA.] Sure, this was Florence doing. FLA. Very likelie.
Those are found waightie strokes which come from th'hand,
But those are killing strokes which come from th'head.
O the rare trickes of a Machivillian!
Hee doth not come like a grosse plodding slave
And buffet you to death: No, my quaint knave—
Hee tickles you to death; makes you die laughing;
As if you had swallow'd downe a pound of saffron.
You see the [f]eat—'tis practis'd in a trice—
To teach Court-honestie it jumpes on Ice.
[FRA.] Now have the people libertie to talke

And descant on his vices. FLA. Miserie of Princes,
That must of force bee censur'd by their slaves!
Not onely blam'd for doing things are ill,
But for not doing all that all men will.
One were better be a thresher.
Uds' death, I would faine speake with this Duke yet.
[FRA.] Now hee's dead?
FLAM. I cannot conjure; but if praiers or oathes
Will get to th'speech of him: though forty devils
Waight on him in his livery of flames,
I'le speake to him, and shake him by the hand,
Though I bee blasted. FRA. Excellent *Lodovico*! *Exit*
What? did you terrifie him at the last gaspe? *Flamineo.*
LOD. Yes; and so idely, that the Duke had like
T'have terrified us. FRA. How? *Enter the Moore,* [*Zanche*].
LOD. You shall heare that heareafter—
See! yon's the infernall, that would make [us] sport.
Now to the revelation of that secret,
Shee promis't when she fell in love with you.
[FRA.] You're passionately met in this sad world.
[ZAN.] I would have you look up, Sir; these Court teares
Claime not your tribute to them. Let those weepe
That guiltily pertake in the sad cause.
I knew last night by a sad dreame I had
Some mischiefe would insue; yet to say truth
My dreame most concern'd you.
LOD. Shal's fall a-dreaming?
FRA. Yes, and for fashion sake Ile dreame with her.
[ZAN.] Mee thought sir, you came stealing to my bed.
FRA. Wilt thou beleeve me sweeting?—by this light
I was a-dreampt on thee too: for me thought
I saw thee naked. [ZAN.] Fy sir! as I told you,
Me thought you lay downe by me.
FRA. So drempt I;
And least thou should'st take cold, I cover'd thee
With this Irish mantle. [ZAN.] Verily I did dreame,
You were somewhat bold with me; but to come to't—
LOD. How? how? I hope you will not go to it here.
FRA. Nay: you must heare my dreame out.
[ZAN.] Well, sir, forth.

FRA. When I threw the mantle ore thee, thou didst laugh
Exceedingly me thought. [ZAN.] Laugh?
FLA. And cridst out,
The haire did tickle thee. [ZAN.] There was a dreame indeed.
LOD. Marke her I prethee, shee simpers like the suddes
A Collier hath bene washt in.
[ZAN.] Come, sir; good fortune tends you; I did tell you
I would reveale a secret—*Isabella*
The Duke of Florence sister was impoison'd,
By a 'fum'd picture: and *Camillo's* necke
Was broke by damn'd *Flamineo*; the mischance
Laid on a vaulting horse. FRA. Most strange! [ZAN.] Most true!
LOD. The bed of snakes is broke.
[ZAN.] I sadly do confesse I had a hand
In the blacke deed.
FRA. Thou kepts[t] their counsell? [ZAN.] Right,
For which, urg'd with contrition, I intend
This night to rob *Vittoria*. LOD. Excellent penitence!
Usurers dreame on't while they sleepe out Sermons.
[ZAN.] To further our escape, I have entreated
Leave to retire me, till the funerall,
Unto a friend i'th country. That excuse
Will further our escape—In coine and jewels
I shall, at least, make good unto your use
An hundred thousand crowns. FRA. O noble wench!
LOD. Those crownes we'le share. [ZAN.] It is a dowry,
Me thinkes, should make that sun-burnt proverbe false,
And wash the Ethiop white. FRA. It shall, away!
[ZAN.] Be ready for our flight. FRA. An howre 'fore day.
O strange discovery! why till now we knew not *Exit the Moore.*
The circumstance of either of their deaths. *Enter Moore.*
[ZAN.] You'le waight about midnight in the Chappel? FRA.
There.
LOD. Why now our action's justified.
FRA. Tush for Justice!
What harmes it Justice? we now, like the partridge,
Purge the disease with lawrell: for the fame
Shall crowne the enterprise and quit the shame. *Exeunt.*

[SCENE IV.]

[*The Same.*]

Enter Flam. and Gasp. at one dore, another way Giovanni attended.

GAS. The yong Duke: Did you e're see a sweeter Prince?

FLA. I have knowne a poore womans bastard better favor'd—this is behind him: Now, to his face—all comparisons were hateful: Wise was the Courtly Peacocke, that being a great Minion, and being compar'd for beauty, by some dottr[el]s that stood by, to the Kingly Eagle, said the Eagle was a farre fairer bird then herselfe, not in respect of her feathers, but in respect of her long Tallants. His will grow out in time—

My gratious Lord. GIO. I pray leave mee Sir.

FLA. Your Grace must be merry: 'tis I have cause to mourne —for wot you what said the little boy that rode behind his father on horsebacke? GIO. Why, what said hee?

FLA. When you are dead, father, (said he) I hope then I shall ride in the saddle—O 'tis a brave thing for a man to sit by himselfe: he may stretch himselfe in the stirrops, looke about, and see the whole compasse of the Hemisphere—you're now, my Lord, ith saddle. GIO. Study your praiers, sir, and be penitent, 'Twere fit you'd thinke on what hath former bin—

I have heard griefe nam'd the eldest child of sinne. *Exit Giov.*

FLA. Study my praiers? he threatens me divinely,
I am falling to peeces already, I care not, though like [*Anaxarchus*]
I were pounded to death in a mortar. And yet that death were fitter for Usurers—gold and themselves to be beaten together, to make a most cordiall chullice for the devill.
He hath his unckles villanous looke already, *Enter Courtier.*
In d[e]cimo sexto. Now sir, what are you?

COUR. It is the pleasure sir of the yong Duke
That you forbeare the Presence, and all roomes
That owe him reverence.

FLAM. So—the wolfe and the raven
Are very pretty fools when th[e]y are yong.
Is it your office, sir, to keepe me out?

COUR. So the Duke wils.

FLA. Verely, Maister Courtier, extreamity is not to bee used

in all offices: Say that a gentlewoman were taken out of her bed about midnight, and committed to Castle Angelo, to the Tower yonder, with nothing about her, but her smocke: would it not shew a cruell part in the gentleman porter to lay clame to her upper garment, pull it ore her head and eares; and put her in nak'd? COUR. Very good: you are merrie. [*Exit.*]

FLA. Doth hee make a Court ejectment of mee? A flaming firebrand casts more smoke without a chimney, then within't. Ile smoore some of them. *Enter Florence.*
How now? Thou art sad.

FRAN. I met even now with the most pitious sight.

FLA. Thou me[e]tst another heare—a pittifull
Degraded Courtier. FRAN. Your reverend mother
Is growne a very old woman in two howers.
I found them winding of *Marcello's* coarse;
And there is such a solemne melodie
'Tweene dolefull songes, teares, and sad elegies:
Such, as old grandames, watching by the dead,
Were wont t'out-weare the nights with; that beleeve mee
I had no eies to guide mee forth the roome,
They were so ore-charg'd with water. FLA. I will see them.

FRAN. 'Twere much uncharety in you: for your sight
Will adde unto their teares. FLA. I will see them.
They are behind the travers. Ile discover
Their superstitious howling. [*Draws the traverse.*]

Cornelia, the Moore and 3. other Ladies discovered, winding Marcello's Coarse. A song.

COR. This rosemarie is wither'd, pray get fresh;
I would have these herbes grow up in his grave
When I am dead and rotten. Reach the bayes,
Ile tye a garland heere about his head:
'Twill keepe my boy from lightning. This sheet
I have kept this twentie yere, and everie daie
Hallow'd it with my praiers, I did not thinke
Hee should have wore it. [ZAN]. Looke you; who are yonder?

COR. O reach mee the flowers.

[ZAN.] Her Ladiships foolish. WOM. Alas! her grief
Hath turn'd her child againe. COR. You're very wellcome.
There's Rosemarie for you, and Rue for you, *to Flamineo.*

Hearts-ease for you. I pray make much of it.
I have left more for my selfe. FRAN. Ladie, who's this?
COR. You are, I take it, the grave-maker. FLA. So.
[ZAN.] 'T is *Flamineo.* [*Cornelia takes his hand.*]
COR. Will you make mee such a foole? heere's a white hand:
Can bloud so soone bee washt out? Let mee see,
When scritch-howles croke upon the chimney tops,
And the strange Cricket ith oven singes and hoppes,
When yellow spots doe on your handes appeare,
Bee certaine then you of a Course shall heare.
Out upon't, how 'tis speckled! h'as handled a toad sure.
Couslep-water is good for the memorie:
Pray buy mee 3. ounces of't.
FLA. I would I were from hence. COR. Do you heere, sir?
Ile give you a saying which my grandmother
Was wont, when she heard the bell tolle, to sing ore
Unto her lute. FLA. Doe, and you will, doe.
COR. *Call for the Robin-Red-brest and the wren,*
Since ore shadie groves they hover, *Cornelia doth this*
And with leaves and flowres doe cover *in severall formes*
The friendlesse bodies of unburied men. *of distraction.*
Call unto his funerall Dole
The Ante, the field-mouse, and the mole
To reare him hillockes, that shall keepe him warme,
And (when gay tombes are rob'd) sustaine no harme,
But keepe the wolfe far thence, that's foe to men,
For with his nailes hee'l dig them up agen.
They would not bury him 'cause hee died in a quarrell
But I have an answere for them.
Let holie Church receive him duly
Since hee payd the Church tithes truly.
His wealth is sum'd, and this is all his store:
This poore men get; and great men get no more.
Now the wares are gone, wee may shut up shop.
Blesse you all good people. *Exeunt Cornelia and Ladies.*
FLA. I have a strange thing in mee, to th' which
I cannot give a name, without it bee
Compassion—I pray leave mee. *Exit Francisco.*
This night Ile know the utmost of my fate,
Ile bee resolv'd what my rich sister meanes

T'assigne mee for my service: I have liv'd
Riotously ill, like some that live in Court.
And sometimes, when my face was full of smiles,
Have felt the mase of conscience in my brest.
Oft gay and honour'd robes those tortures trie,
"Wee thinke cag'd birds sing, when indeed they crie.
Ha! I can stand thee. Neerer, neerer yet.
Enter Brachia[no's] Ghost. In his leather Cassock & breeches, bootes, a coule; [in his hand] a pot of lilly-flowers with a scull in't.
What a mockerie hath death made of thee! thou look'st sad.
In what place art thou? in yon starrie gallerie,
Or in the cursed dungeon? No? not speake?
Pray, Sir, resolve mee, what religions best
For a man to die in? or is it in your knowledge
To answere mee how long I have to live?
That's the most necessarie question.
Not answere? Are you still like some great men
That onely walke like shadowes up and downe,
And to no purpose? say:——
What's that? O fatall! hee throwes earth upon mee.
A dead mans scull beneath the rootes of flowers.
I pray speake Sir, our Italian Church-men
Make us beleve, dead men hold conference
With their familiars, and many times
Will come to bed to them, and eat with them.
The Ghost throwes earth upon him and shewes him the scull.
Hee's gone; and see, the scull and earth are vanisht.
Exit Ghost.
This is beyond melancholie. I doe dare my fate
To doe its worst. Now to my sisters lodging,
And summe up all these horrours; the disgrace
The Prince threw on mee; next the pitious sight
Of my dead brother; and my Mothers dotage;
And last this terrible vision. All these
Shall with *Vittoria's* bountie turne to good,
Or I will drowne this weapon in her blood. *Exit.*

[SCENE V.]

[*The Same.*]

Enter Francisco, Lodovico, and Hortensio [overhearing them].

Lod. My Lord upon my soule you shall no further:
You have most ridiculously ingag'd your selfe

Too far allready. For my part, I have payd
All my debts, so if I should chance to fall
My Creditours fall not with mee; and I vow
To quite all in this bold assemblie
To the meanest follower. My Lord leave the Cittie,
Or Ile forsweare the murder. FRAN. Farewell *Lodovico.*
If thou do'st perish in this glorious act,
Ile reare unto thy memorie that fame
Shall in the ashes keepe alive thy name. [*Exeunt.*]

HOR. There's some blacke deed on foot. Ile presently
Downe to the Citadell, and raise some force.
These strong Court factions that do brooke no checks,
In the cariere [oft] breake the Riders neckes. [*Exit.*]

[SCENE VI.]

[*The Same. Vittoria's Chamber.*]

Enter Vittoria with a booke in her hand, Zanke, Flamineo following them.

FLA. What are you at your prayers? Give o're.
VIT. How Ruffin?
FLA. I come to you 'bout worldly businesse:
Sit downe, sit downe: Nay stay, blouze, you may heare it,
The dores are fast inough. VIT. Ha, are you drunke?
FLA. Yes, yes, with wormewood water, you shall tast
Some of it presently. VIT. What intends the fury?
FLA. You are my Lords Executrix, and I claime
Reward, for my long service. VIT. For your service?
FLA. Come therfore, heere is pen and Inke, set downe
Shee writes. What you will give me.
VIT. There— FLA. Ha! have you done already?—
'Tis a most short conveyance. VIT. I will read it.
I give that portion to thee, and no other
Which *Caine* gron'd under having slaine his brother.
FLA. A most courtly Pattent to beg by.
VIT. You are a villaine.
FLA. Is't come to this? the[y] say affrights cure agues:
Thou hast a Devill in thee; I will try
If I can scarre him from thee: Nay sit still:
My Lord hath left me yet two case of Jewels
Shall make me scorne your bounty; you shall see them. [*Exit.*]
VIT. Sure hee's distracted. ZAN. O he's desperate—

For your owne safety give him gentle language. *He enters*
FLA. Looke, these are better far at a dead lift, *with two*
Then all your jewell house. VIT. And yet mee thinkes, *case of*
These stones have no faire lustre, they are ill set. *pistols.*
FLA. I'le turne the right side towards you: you shall see
How the[y] will sparkle. VIT. Turne this horror from mee:
What do you want? what would you have mee doe?
Is not all mine, yours? have I any children?
FLA. Pray thee good woman doe not trouble mee
With this vaine wor[l]dly businesse; say your prayers,
I made a vow to my deceased Lord,
Neither your selfe, nor I should out-live him,
The numbring of foure howers. VIT. Did he enjoyne it?
FLA. He did, and 'twas a deadly jealousy,
Least any should enjoy thee after him,
That urg'd him vow me to it: For my death—
I did propound it voluntarily, knowing
If hee could not be safe in his owne Court
Being a great Duke, what hope then for us?
VIT. This is your melancholy and dispaire. FLA. Away—
Foole [that] thou art to thinke that Polititians
Do use to kill the effects of injuries
And let the cause live: shall we groane in irons,
Or be a shamefull and a waighty burthen
To a publicke scaffold? This is my resolve—
I would not live at any mans entreaty
Nor dye at any's bidding. VIT. Will you heare me?
FLA. My life hath done service to other men,
My death shall serve mine owne turne; make you ready.
VIT. Do you meane to die indeed?
FLA. With as much pleasure
As e're my father gat me. VIT. [*aside*] Are the dores lockt?
ZAN. [*aside*] Yes Madame.
VIT. Are you growne an Atheist? will you turne your body,
Which is the goodly pallace of the soule
To the soules slaughter house? ô the cursed Devill
Which doth present us with all other sinnes
Thrice candied ore; Despaire with gaule and *stibium*,
Yet we carouse it off; [*aside*] Cry out for helpe!—
Makes us forsake that which was made for Man,

The world, to sinke to that was made for devils,
Eternall darkenesse. ZAN. Helpe, helpe! FLA. I'le stop your throate
With Winter plums— VIT. I prethee yet remember,
Millions are now in graves, which at last day
Like Mandrakes shall rise shreeking. FLA. Leave your prating,
For these are but grammaticall laments,
Feminine arguments, and they move me
As some in Pulpits move their Auditory
More with their exclamation then sence
Of reason, or sound Doctrine. ZAN. [*aside*] Gentle Madam
Seeme to consent, onely perswade him teach
The way to death; let him dye first.
VIT. 'Tis good, I apprehend it—
To kill one's selfe is meate that we must take
Like pils, not chew't, but quickly swallow it—
The smart a'th wound, or weakenesse of the hand
May else bring trebble torments. FLA. I have held it
A wretched and most miserable life,
Which is not able to dye. VIT. O but frailty!
Yet I am now resolv'd, farewell affliction;
Behold *Brachiano*, I that while you liv'd
Did make a flaming Altar of my heart
To sacrifice unto you...Now am ready
To sacrifice heart and all. Fare-well *Zanche*.
ZAN. How Madam! Do you thinke that I'le out-live you?
Especially when my best selfe *Flamineo*
Goes the same voiage. FLA. O most loved Moore!
ZAN. Onely by all my love let me entreat you;
Since it is most necessary [one] of us
Do violence on our selves; let you or I
Be her sad taster, teach her how to dye.
FLA. Thou dost instruct me nobly, take these pistols,
Because my hand is stain'd with bloud already:
Two of these you shall levell at my brest,
Th'other gainst your owne, and so we'le dye,
Most equally contented: But first sweare
Not to out-live me. VIT. & [ZAN.] Most religiously.
FLA. Then here's an end of me: fare-well day-light
And ô contemtible Physike! that dost take

So long a study, onely to preserve
So short a life, I take my leave of thee.
These are two cupping-glasses, that shall draw *Shewing*
All my infected bloud out— *the pistols.*
Are you ready? BOTH. Ready.

FLA. Whither shall I go now? O *Lucian* thy ridiculous Purgatory—to finde *Alexander* the great cobling shooes, *Pompey* tagging points, and *Julius Cæsar* making haire buttons, *Haniball* selling blacking, and *Augustus* crying garlike, *Charlemaigne* selling lists by the dozen, and King *Pippin* crying Apples in a cart drawn with one horse!
Whether I resolve to Fire, Earth, water, Aire,
Or all the Elements by scruples; I know not
Nor greatly care,——Shoote, shoote,
Of all deaths the violent death is best,
For from our selves it steales our selves so fast *They shoot*
The paine once apprehended is quite past. *and run*
VIT. What, are you drop't? *to him*
FLA. I am mixt with Earth already. As you are Noble *& tread*
Performe your vowes, and bravely follow mee. *upon him.*
VIT. Whither—to hell? ZAN. To most assured damnation.
VIT. O thou most cursed devill. ZAN. Thou art caught—
VIT. In thine owne Engine, I tread the fire out
That would have bene my ruine.

FLA. Will you be perjur'd? what a religious oath was Stix that the Gods never durst sweare by and violate! ô that wee had such an oath to minister, and to be so well kept in our Courts of Justice.

VIT. Thinke whither thou art going. ZAN. And remember
What villanies thou hast acted. VIT. This thy death
Shall make me like a blazing ominous starre,
Looke up and tremble. FLA. O I am caught with a springe!
VIT. You see the Fox comes many times short home,
'Tis here prov'd true. FLA. Kild with a couple of braches.
VIT. No fitter offring for the infernall furies
Then one in whom they raign'd while hee was living.

FLA. O the waies darke and horrid! I cannot see,
Shall I have no company? VIT. O yes thy sinnes,
Do runne before thee to fetch fire from hell,
To light thee thither. FLA. O I smell soote,

Most s[t]inking soote, the chimneis a-fire,
My liver's purboil'd like scotch holly-bread;
There's a plumber laying pipes in my guts, it scalds; -
Wilt thou out-live mee? ZAN. Yes, and drive a stake
Th[o]rough thy body; for we'le give it out,
Thou didst this violence upon thy selfe.
FLA O cunning Devils! now I have tri'd your love,
And doubled all your reaches. I am not wounded: *Flamineo*
The pistols held no bullets: 'twas a plot *riseth.*
To prove your kindnesse to mee; and I live
To punish your ingratitude—I knew
One time or other you would finde a way
To give me a strong potion—ô Men
That lye upon your death-beds, and are haunted
With howling wives, neere trust them, they'le re-marry
Ere the worme peirce your winding sheete: ere the Spider
Make a thinne curtaine for your Epitaphes.
How cunning you were to discharge! Do you practise at the Artillery yard? Trust a woman? never, never; *Brachiano* bee my pre[ce]dent: we lay our soules to pawne to the Devill for a little pleasure, and a woman makes the bill of sale. That ever man should marry! For one *Hypermnestra* that sav'd her Lord and husband, forty nine of her sisters cut their husbands throates all in one night. There was a shole of vertuous horse-leeches.
Here are two other Instruments. *Enter Lod. Gasp.* [*disguised*].
VIT. Helpe, helpe!
FLA. What noise is that? hah? falce keies i'th Court.
LOD. We have brought you a Maske. FLA. A matachine it seemes,
By your drawne swords. Chu[r]ch-men turn'd revellers!
[GAS.] *Isabella, Isabella!*
LOD. Doe you know us now? FLA. *Lodovico* and *Gasparo*!
LOD. Yes and that Moore the Duke gave pention to
Was the great Duke of Florence. VIT. O wee are lost.
FLA. You shall not take Justice from forth my hands,
O let me kill her.——Ile cut my safty
Through your coates of steele: Fate's a Spaniell,
Wee cannot beat it from us: what remaines now?
Let all that doe ill, take this pre[ce]dent:
Man may his Fate foresee, but not prevent.

And of all Axiomes this shall winne the prise,
'Tis better to be fortunate then wise.
GAS. Bind him to the pillar. VIT. O your gentle pitty:
I have seene a black-bird that would sooner fly
To a mans bosome, then to stay the gripe
Of the feirce Sparrow-hawke. GAS. Your hope deceives you.
VIT. If Florence be ith Court, would hee would kill mee!
GAS. Foole! Princes give rewards with their owne hands,
But death or punishment by the handes of others.
LOD. Sirha you once did strike mee, Ile strike you
Into the Center.
FLA. Thou'lt doe it like a hangeman; a base hangman;
Not like a noble fellow, for thou seest
I cannot strike againe. LOD. Dost laugh?
FLA. Wouldst have me dye, as I was borne, in whining?
GAS. Recommend your selfe to heaven.
FLA. Noe I will carry mine owne commendations thither.
LOD. Oh could I kill you forty times a day
And us't foure yeere together; 'tweare to[o] little:
Nought greev's but that you are to[o] few to feede
The famine of our vengeance. What dost thinke on?
FLA. Nothing; of nothing: leave thy idle questions,
I am ith way to study a long silence,
To prate were idle, I remember nothing.
Thers nothing of so infinit vexation
As mans owne thoughts. LOD. O thou glorious strumpet,
Could I devide thy breath from this pure aire
When't leaves thy body, I would sucke it up
And breath't upon some dunghill. VIT. You, my Deathsman!
Me thinkes thou doest not looke horrid enough,
Thou hast to[o] good a face to be a hang-man,
If thou be, doe thy office in right forme;
Fall downe upon thy knees and aske forgivenesse.
LOD. O thou hast bin a most prodigious comet,
But Ile cut of[f] your traine: kill the Moore first.
VIT. You shall not kill her first. behould my breast,
I will be waited on in death; my servant
Shall never go before mee. GAS. Are you so brave?
VIT. Yes I shall wellcome death
As Princes doe some great Embassadors;

Ile meete thy weapon halfe way. LOD. Thou dost tremble,
Mee thinkes feare should dissolve thee into ayre.
VIT. O thou art deceiv'd, I am to[o] true a woman:
Conceit can never kill me: Ile tell thee what,
I will not in my death shed one base teare,
Or if looke pale, for want of blood, not feare.
[GAS.] Thou art my taske, blacke fury. ZAN. I have blood
As red as either of theirs; wilt drinke some?
'Tis good for the falling sicknesse: I am proud
Death cannot alter my complexion,
For I shall neere looke pale. LOD. Strike, strike,
With a Joint motion. [*They strike.*] VIT. 'Twas a manly blow,
The next thou giv'st, murder some sucking Infant,
And then thou wilt be famous. FLA. O what blade ist?
A Toledo, or an English Fox?
I ever thought a Cutler should distinguish
The cause of my death, rather then a Doctor.
Search my wound deeper: tent it with the steele
That made it. VIT. O my greatest sinne lay in my blood.
Now my blood paies for't. FLA. Th'art a noble sister,
I love thee now; if woeman doe breed man,
Shee ought to teach him manhood: Fare thee well.
Know many glorious woemen that are fam'd
For masculine vertue, have bin vitious,
Onely a happier silence did betyde them.
Shee hath no faults, who hath the art to hide them.
VIT. My soule, like to a ship in a blacke storme,
Is driven I know not whither. FLA. Then cast ancor.
"Prosperity doth bewitch men seeming cleere,
"But seas doe laugh, shew white, when Rocks are neere.
"Wee cease to greive, cease to be fortunes slaves,
"Nay cease to dye by dying. Art thou gonne
And thou so neare the bottome? falce reporte
Which saies that woemen vie with the nine Muses
For nine tough durable lives: I doe not looke
Who went before, nor who shall follow mee;
Noe, at my selfe I will begin and end.
"While we looke up to heaven wee confound
"Knowledge with knowledge. ô I am in a mist.
VIT. O happy they that never saw the Court,

"Nor ever knew great Man but by report. *Vittoria dyes.*

FLA. I recover like a spent taper, for a flash
And instantly go out.
Let all that belong to Great men remember th'ould wi[v]es tradition, to be like the Lyons ith Tower on Candlemas day, to mourne if the Sunne shine, for feare of the pittifull remainder of winter to come.
'Tis well yet there's some goodnesse in my death,
My life was a blacke charnell: I have c[a]ught
An everlasting could. I have lost my voice
Most irrecoverably: Farewell glorious villaines,
"This busie trade of life appeares most vaine,
"Since rest breeds rest, where all seeke paine by paine.
Let no harsh flattering Bels resound my knell,
Strike thunder, and strike lowde to my farewell. *Dyes.*

Enter Embassad: and Giovanni.

ENG. E. This way, this way, breake ope the doores, this way.

LOD. Ha, are wee betraid?
Why then lets constantly dye all together,
And having finisht this most noble deede,
Defy the worst of fate; not feare to bleed.

ENG. [E.] Keepe backe the Prince, shoot, shoot—

LOD. O I am wounded.
I feare I shall be tane. GIO. You bloudy villaines,
By what authority have you committed
This Massakre? LOD. By thine. GIO. Mine? LOD. Yes, thy unckle,
Which is a part of thee, enjoyn'd us to't:
Thou knowst me I am sure, I am Cou[n]t *Lodowicke*,
And thy most noble unckle in disguise
Was last night in thy Court. GIO. Ha! [GAS.] Yes, that Moore
Thy father chose his pentioner.

GIO. He turn'd murderer!
Away with them to prison, and to torture;
All that have hands in this, shall tast our justice,
As I hope heaven. LOD. I do glory yet,
That I can call this act mine owne: For my part,
The racke, the gallowes, and the torturing wheele
Shall bee but sound sleepes to me, here's my rest—

"I limb'd this night-peece and it was my best.
Gio. Remove the bodies—see my honoured Lord,
What use you ought make of their punishment.
Let guilty men remember their blacke deedes,
Do leane on crut[c]hes, made of slender reedes. [*Exeunt.*]

Instead of an Epilogue onely this of *Martial* supplies me.

Hæc fuerint nobis præmia si placui.

For the action of the play, twas generally well, and I dare affirme, with the Joint testimony of some of their owne quality, (for the true imitation of life, without striving to make nature a monster) the best that ever became them: whereof as I make a generall acknowledgement, so in particular I must remember the well approved industry of my freind *Maister Perkins*, and confesse the worth of his action did Crowne both the beginning and end.

FINIS.

COMMENTARY

THE WHITE DEVIL

"Notes are often necessary, but they are necessary evils. Let him that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakespeare, and who desires to feel the highest pleasure the drama can give, read every play, from the first scene to the last, with utter negligence of all his commentators. When his fancy is once on the wing, let it not stoop at correction or explanation. When his attention is strongly engaged, let it disdain alike to turn aside to the name of Theobald and of Pope. Let him read on through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue and his interest in the fable. And when the pleasures of novelty have ceased, let him attempt exactness, and read the commentators."

JOHNSON, *Preface to Shakespeare*.

C. = Crawford's articles in his *Collectanea* on Webster's borrowings from Montaigne, Sidney, etc.
H.D.S. = H. Dugdale Sykes.

TITLE-PAGE

The White Divel: *i.e.* a devil disguised under a fair outside.

The same idea recurs in Brachiano's cry of disillusionment (IV. 2. 88):

> Your beautie! ô, ten thousand curses on't.
> How long have I beheld the devill in christall!

The phrase is found (and explains itself) in the title of a sermon preached at Paul's Cross in March 1613 by T. Adams—*The white divell, or the Hypocrite uncased.* In his preface to its fourth impression in 1615 Adams writes: "Lastly some have the title sticking in their stomachs: as if Christ himselfe had not called Judas a Devill; and likened an Hypocrite to a Whited Sepulcher"; and in the sermon itself he adds "of Judas, to use Luther's word, we will call him a white Devill". But though Adams prefers to make Luther his source, the recent appearance of Webster's play with the same name may have influenced him, and this may even have been the reason why Adams's use of the title stuck in certain stomachs. He published subsequently a companion volume, *The Black Devil, or the apostate.*

Still the expression was too common for us to build much on it. Cf. Shirley, *Grateful Servant*, III. 4: "Hypocrisy?—Yes, a delicate white devil". So in Middleton's *Fair Quarrel* (III. 2. 138) when Jane's apparently respectable doctor suddenly tries to seduce her, she cries:

> What a white devil have I met withal!

Bullen quotes there Hall's *Downfall of Maygames* (1661), p. 1: "White Devils, who under pretence of extraordinary sanctity published open heresy..." (as contrasted with the openly wicked "Black Devils viz. blasphemous drunkards, blasphemous health-drinkers etc.").

Thus Lamb's endlessly quoted and abused phrase about the "innocence-resembling boldness" of Vittoria in the trial-scene does find some slight justification in Webster's own title for the play, though it certainly ill describes her bearing in that particular scene. Cf. also Middleton, *The Widow*, IV. 2. 41–2:

> The miller's a *white devil*; he wears his theft
> *Like innocence* in badges most apparently
> Upon his nose.

the famous Venetian Curtizan. Probably Webster confused, whether knowingly or not, the Umbrian Vittoria Accoramboni, who wedded the Duke of Bracciano, with her contemporary, the Venetian Bianca Capello, who wedded the Duke of Florence, Bracciano's brother-in-law. See Hist. Introd. to the play, p. 89.

the Queenes Maieſties Servants. This company, originally formed as "the Earl of Worcester's Men", is first heard of in 1555; in 1603–4 they took this later title under the patronage of Queen Anne and were recognized by the Privy Council as one of the three companies to be "allowed". They did not very long survive their patroness's death in 1619. (See Chambers, II. xiii. xxi.)

Non inferiora ſecutus. Virgil, *Aen.* VI. 170—where Misenus the trumpeter, who had passed from the following of Hector to that of Aeneas, is described as thereby "engaged in a no less noble service", "following no meaner lord".

The application here is far from obvious. The words should perhaps be rendered—"following no ignoble theme" or "a theme not less noble than my rivals or predecessors have treated". The motto might, it is true, with more force and fidelity to Virgil's own use of the phrase, mean rather: "I have served no meaner masters", *i.e.* "I have not played down to the mob": only that is precisely what the dramatist proceeds to lament, in his preface, that he has been forced to do. We cannot inquire too closely: Webster often gives the impression of loving Latin quotations better than he understood them.

N.O.: Nicholas Okes, printer from 1606 to 1636; established in 1613 near Holborn Bridge: praised by Heywood as an honest, careful workman (*Epistle* to *Apology for Actors*), in contrast to the "infinite faults" of W. Jaggard "as misquotations, mistaking of syllables, misplacing halfe-lines, coining of strange and never heard-of words".

Thomas Archer: bookseller from 1603 to 1631, when (Feb. 10th) he assigned certain copies to Hugh Perry, who published the Second Quarto of this play in that year.

TO THE READER

3. *nos hæc novimus esse nihil.* Martial XIII. 2. 8: "I know this work is nothing worth"—the same modest motto as stands on the title-page of the first volume of two very different poets—the Tennysons' *Poems by Two Brothers.*

Quite probably Webster is quoting, here and in 15–6, at second-hand; for, as Stoll points out, both the phrases he uses occur in the three lines cited in Dekker's preface to *Satiromastix* (1602):

> Non potes in Nugas dicere plura meas
> Ipse ego quam dixi—Qui se mirantur, in illos
> Virus habe: nos haec novimus esse nihil.

Webster might however equally well be drawing on Montaigne's quotation from this epigram (*Essays*, II. 17).

4–5. *so dull a time of Winter...so open and blacke a Theater.* Though the stage in the "public" theatres was canopied with its "heavens", the pit was open to the sky and must have been very far from comfortable in winter. "We stood the intemperate weather", say some of the players in a letter to Alleyn in 1617, "till more intemperate Mr Meade thrust us over". (See Jusserand, *Lit. Hist. of the Eng. People*, III. 54–5.) Further, as plays began at two o'clock and lasted from two to three hours, the theatre would in winter be growing "blacke" as well as cold before the end. Whatever illumination may have been given by tarred-rope torches or the like, it was doubtless pretty feeble. Hence the advantage of the roofed and artificially lighted "private" houses like Blackfriars; as may be witnessed by the offer of Edward Kirkham about this time, to prove in court that the King's Men made "more in one winter in the said great hall (*i.e.* Blackfriars) by a thousand pounds than they were used to get on the Bankside" (J. Q. Adams, *Shakespearian Playhouses*, 226). The right reading is however perhaps not *blacke* but *bleake*: see Text. Note.

5. *Theater.* The Red Bull in Clerkenwell. Dyce says "the Phoenix"; but Fleay points out that this theatre only came into existence later, *c.* 1617, and suggests the Curtain, on the theory that the play is to be dated 1607–8. This is however too early; and *c.* 1611–2 there is no evidence for connecting the Queen's Men with any house but the Red Bull. The play was indeed revived at the Phoenix by Queen Henrietta's Men in 1622 (*v.* Fleay, II. 271).

Webster's complaints of the blackness or bleakness of their theatre and the asinine character of their audiences cannot have been very agreeable to the Queen's Majesty's Servants; it seems possible that he may have spared their feelings so little because he had by now attached himself to the King's Men who produced his next play, *The Duchess of Malfi*, in 1613–4.

11–2. *Nec Rhoncos...molestas.* Martial IV. 86. 7–8. The poet is addressing his book: if you win the approval of Apollinaris, he says,

> You shall not fear the sneer of Envy's upturned nose,
> Nor wrap the fish's sides that to fiery torment goes.

(Lit. "You shall not fear the turned-up noses of the more spiteful critics, nor provide mackerel with robes of torture": the *tunica molesta* being the inflammable garment smeared with pitch which was put on criminals destined to be burnt alive in the Amphitheatre or to illuminate the Imperial Gardens.)

The commas in the middle of the lines, deleted by previous editors, are certainly intentional, and meant to mark the metrical pause at the caesura.

13–24. For this denunciation by an Elizabethan dramatist of the romantic license of Elizabethan drama cf. Jonson's preface to *Sejanus* (1605), the second paragraph of which is clearly copied here: "First, if it be objected that what I publish is no true poem, in the strict laws of time, I confess it: as also in the want of a proper chorus... In the mean time, if in truth of argument, dignity of persons, gravity and height of elocution, fulness and frequency of sentence, I have discharged the other offices of a tragic writer, let not the absence of these forms be imputed to me...".

14–5. *non potes...dixi.* Martial XIII. 2. 4–5: "You cannot possibly speak worse of these trifles of mine than I have spoken myself". See on l. 3 above.

16–7. *sententious Tragedy*: *i.e.* full of maxims (*sententiae*—γνῶμαι) like the plays of Seneca, which were praised by Sidney and imitated in such academic dramas as *Gorboduc* and the works of the Countess of Pembroke's circle. Cf. Braithwaite, *English Gentleman* (1631), "sententious Seneca".

18. *gravety*: weight and dignity.

19. *life'n Death*: "make vivid the deaths of the characters"—as, for instance, in Jonson's play where the Messenger relates the death of Sejanus.

20. *Nuntius.* The frequent use of Messengers being characteristic of the strictly Classical play, owing both to its unity of place and its general avoidance of acts of violence and horror on the stage—"*ne pueros coram populo Medea trucidet*". We may recall the pleasant complaint brought against the Classical play by Ogier, that strange stray Romantic of French seventeenth-century criticism: "Il est plus commode à une bonne hôtellerie qu'il n'est convenable à une excellente tragédie d'y voir arriver incessamment des messagers". (See Jusserand, *Lit. Hist. of the Eng. People*, III. 34.)

20–1. *O dura...ilia.* Horace, *Epod.* 3. 4: "O strong stomachs of harvesters!" (because they can stomach garlic. Horace is addressing to Maecenas a mock-tragic tirade on the monstrousness of using that vegetable in cooking).

24. *Haec...relinques.* Horace, *Epistles*, I. 7. 19: "What you leave will only go to feed the pigs to-day" (as the Calabrian peasant politely says, when you decline the pears he presses on you at parting).

28. *Eurypides to Alcestides.* This anecdote (which comes from Valerius Maximus III. 7) is told again by Jonson in his *Discoveries*. Indeed Jonson was himself sore on the same point of slow writing; he complains that his critics,

> When his plays come forth, think they can flout them,
> With saying, he was a year about them;

and Carew writes to him:

> let the rout say,
> The running sands that, ere thou make a play,
> Count the slow minutes, might a Goodwin frame[1].

Accordingly we find Jonson, after retailing this anecdote in *Discoveries*, adding with a grunt of satisfaction: "I have met many of these rattles, that made a noise and buzzed. They had their hum and no more". Only, being a better Latinist than Webster (and most of Webster's editors), he realized that the critic's name which Valerius Maximus only gives in the dative, "Alcestidi", must have been Alcestis. No tragic poet of this name is, however, known: and doubtless it is a corrupt form due to false association with Euripides' play, the *Alcestis*. The true name is perhaps Acestor; for a tragic poet of barbarian origin with this name was a contemporary of Euripides and a butt of Aristophanes (*Birds*, 31; *Wasps*, 1221). This identification is also implied, I find, by Nauck, *Trag. Graec. Fragm.* Index, *s.v.* Acestor).

It is not uncharacteristic that the precise Jonson gives "Alcestis" 100 verses, following the Latin, whereas Webster heightens it to 300.

Thomas Campbell in his *Lives of the Poets* (1848) has an engaging comment on this passage: "In the same preface Webster deprives himself of the only apology that could be offered for his absurdities as a dramatist by acknowledging that he wrote slowly: a circumstance in which he modestly compares himself to Euripides".

41. *be read by their light.* Stoll suggests that this is borrowed from Jonson's Dedication of *Catiline* (1611) to Pembroke: "I crave leave to stand near your light and by that to be read".

Indeed Webster's whole attack on the popular reception of truly Classical plays may, I think, have been partly provoked by the recent stage-failure of *Catiline*, with its Classical chorus, in 1611.

45. *non...mori.* Martial X. 2. 12: "These are memorials that know

[1] Cf. the fluent Shakespeare's supposed tavern epitaph on Jonson,

> "Who while hee liv'de was a sloe thinge
> And now being dead is No-thinge".

(Herford and Simpson's *Ben Jonson*, I. 186.)

not how to die". Martial is contrasting the immortality of literature with the crumbling sepulchres of the Roman great:

> The wild fig splits the stone whereunder
> Messalla sleeps; and with a jeer
> By Crispus' horses cracked in sunder
> Jogs the laughing muleteer.

Stoll points out that the tag, "non...mori", occurs at the end of Dekker's Preface to *A Knight's Conjuring* (1607), whence Webster may have borrowed it. But Stoll's argument (p. 215) that he *must* have done so, is based on a misunderstanding of Martial. In any case it was common enough to thumb that Latin poet, even for uneducated persons like Earle's "Meer Empty Wit"—"A verse or some such work he may sometimes get up to, but seldom above the stature of an epigram, and that with some relief out of Martial, which is the ordinary companion of his pocket, and he reads him as he were inspired".

Webster uses the quotation again on the title-page of his *Monuments of Honour* and also on that of the Sixth Impression of "Overbury's" *Characters* (if we are right in supposing him to have edited it).

THE PERSONS

Zanche, A Moor. Cf. Zanthia, Sophonisba's maid, in Marston's tragedy (pub. 1606): and Zanthia the Moor in Fletcher and Massinger's *Knight of Malta* (acted 1618–9).

I. 1.

Outer stage[1].

1. *Banisht!* Given good acting (for it is difficult to do quite right), I know no opening in any play more effective on the stage than this, with its gift both of snatching the audience *in medias res* and of striking at once the bitter, angry note of the whole tragedy. It has been objected that Lodovico is too unimportant for this prominence. Such a view forgets that he is the destined destroyer of Brachiano, Vittoria, and Flamineo. He is the executioner of the play; and as such I like to imagine him appearing, at this first moment, clothed from head to foot in red.
2. *Democritus.* It has been justly complained that D. held no such opinion as this. Lodovico may be supposed to invoke him here either as the "Laughing Philosopher" of popular tradition (Aelian, *Var.*

[1] It is assumed that the reader is roughly acquainted with the arrangement of the Elizabethan stage and its three main divisions—the "apron" or Outer Stage, jutting into the auditorium; the "study" or Inner Stage, opened or shut off at need by curtains; and the "balcony" or Upper Stage. Any one, any two, or all three of these might be in use at a given moment. In these notes "Whole Stage" means the Inner and Outer Stages together.

Hist. 4. 20), who was supposed to have looked on human life as a farce; or as the master of Epicurus, who did hold that mankind are not governed by heaven, but by their own instinctive pursuit of the pleasant and avoidance of the painful—the desire of "reward" and the fear of "punishment".

7. *quite*: quit, requite.

8–9. *Your woolfe... hungry*: *i.e.* the prosperous are never regarded as wolves, however wolfish they may be; only the penniless and hungry adventurer is treated as a beast of prey to be hunted down by society; (*then*, of course, = *than*).

11–2. This bitter turn may recall Burke's famous retort, as described by Macaulay, to the plea put forward in defence of Warren Hastings, that the Brahmins had erected temples to him at Benares—how then could the governor have been an oppressor? "He knew," was the answer, "that they erected shrines not only to the benignant deities of light and plenty, but also to the fiends who presided over small-pox and murder."

12. *pasht*: smashed.

16. *Mummia*: (mediev. Lat. *mumia* from Arabic *mumiya*—*mūm* being "wax", used in embalming). The Persian *mumiai* means "pitch" or "asphalt", a substance used in antiquity both medicinally and to preserve mummies. In the Middle Ages physicians in the East conceived the idea that the most potent medicinal pitch must be that used for mummies, which could still be scraped off them. The next step was to use pieces of the mummied flesh itself; or, failing that, baked corpses of recent date (*v. Encyl. Brit.* "Mummy").

This idea seems to have become mixed up with another belief, held particularly by Paracelsus, in some vital element that persisted in the body even after death. This "balsam", as he called it, was what enabled the body, when injured, to heal itself unless hindered by dirt. And even when a man is dead—"his whole body is profitable and good and may be prepared into a most precious Mummie. For although the spirit of life went out of such a Body, yet the Balsome, in which lies the Life, remains, which doth as Balsome preserve other mens".

This barbarous medicine (it was taken both internally and externally) persisted into the eighteenth and, in parts of Europe, into the nineteenth century.

18. *kennell*: has, of course, no connection with dog-kennels (Lat. *canis*); being simply a variant of "channel" (Lat. *canalis*), hence = "gutter". So Smollett uses "kennel-nymph" of a woman of the streets.

21. *Caviare*: the salted roe of sturgeons, the finer kind of which has always been a luxury because it can only be prepared in winter and is extremely perishable. The earliest instance in the *N.E.D.* is dated 1591. Cf. (1616) Bullokar: "*Cavearee*—a strange mete like blacke sope".

25. *Meteor*: here, apparently, in the modern sense "a falling star", though the Elizabethans gave the name also to other atmospheric phenomena (Gk. μετέωρος—"on high"), such as lightning, wind, rain, and St Elmo's Fire.

25. *drawne forth the earth*, because meteors were supposed to be vaporous "exhalations" drawn up by the sun, and then ignited in the upper atmosphere. Cf. Person's *Varieties of Meteors*: "fumes being a thin exhalation, hot and dry, elevated from the Earth...from whence, and of which, our Comets, Fiery-Darts, Dragons, and other igneous Meteors do proceed". Also "Beaumont and Fletcher", *Thierry and Theodoret*, IV. 1:

> And kings from height of all their painted glories,
> Fall like spent exhalations to this centre.

29. *Well...two buckets*: an apt description of a favourite mannerism of Webster's dialogue (cf. *D.M.* I. 1. 318–66; *D.L.* II. 1. 176 ff.).

29. *tend*: wait for (*attendre*). Cf. T. Wright, *Passions of the mind*, v. 3. 182: "Then tend thy turne, when neighbors housen burne".

31. *Murders*. Doubtless Webster had heard something of the assassination of Vincenzo Vitelli by the historical Lodovico (*v.* Hist. Introd. p. 80).

34. *mediate*: "avoid extremes" is the rendering of the *N.E.D.*, which can however give no other example of this sense. I do not feel sure that a special meaning is needed for this one passage. Can we not render: "The law (*i.e.* the way it is administered) sometimes *intercedes* between the offender and the strict justice of the extreme penalty"? "Mediate" is a word which these plays put to strange uses—see on *A.V.* II. 1. 41; *C.C.* III. 3. 87.

39 ff. There is considerable skill in the device by which this piece of necessary exposition is introduced and made both terse in itself and dramatic through Lodovico's passion. Greg indeed takes the passage to imply that Lodovico was banished at Brachiano's suit (*Mod. Lang. Quart.* Dec. 1900). And it would certainly knit the play more closely together and make its causation clearer, if we could suppose that Brachiano had Lodovico banished as the lover of his Duchess, and that Lodovico hated Brachiano as the cause of his exile.

Only there is no real ground for inferring either of these things. Lodovico's love for Isabella is first revealed by the conjurer in II. 2. 33. And Lodovico clearly names Brachiano here simply as a general example of the corruption of the times, which have one law for the high, another for the low. And then it occurs to him, with added bitterness, that Brachiano's intervention could easily have saved him personally. That Brachiano not only failed to prevent the sentence, but actually caused it, no audience could possibly be expected to gather from these few words.

44. *Have a full man within you*: keep up your manhood, your courage. Cf. Brome, *Court Beggar*, 1. 1. (H.D.S.):

> The fellow's honest, valiant, and discreet,
> *Full man*, in whom those three additions meet.

And see on *D.M.* II. 2. 84.

45–6. *Trees...new set.* Perhaps from Florio's Montaigne, III. v.: "as hearbes and trees are bettered and fortified by being transplanted". (H.D.S.)

47–8. *Perfumes...sents*: a favourite commonplace. Cf. *D.M.* III. 5. 89; Lyly, *Euphues* (Arber), p. 41: "If you pownd Spices, they smell the sweeter"; Bacon, *Of Adversity* (quoted by Dyce): "Certainly virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue". H.D.S. points out that Webster cannot however be borrowing from Bacon, since the passage quoted first occurs in the 1625 edition of his *Essays*.

51. *cut-works*: stuff *cut* into an open-work pattern, not *woven* like lace, and made particularly in Italy. Cf. Jonson, *Every Man out of his Hum.* IV. 4; Massinger, *Parl. of Love*, II. 1.

60. *make use of it*: profit by the experience.

60. [*Sennet*]: a sounding of trumpets.

I. 2.

Whole stage. The scene is vaguely Camillo's house, here perhaps the entrance-hall, later the banqueting-house (cf. l. 121). Symonds's "*Camillo's Garden*" seems less likely.

7. (*whisper*: this direction must apply to Brachiano and Flamineo.

8. *caroach*: coach.

10. *Can't*: can it.

19–20. From Florio's Montaigne, II. 17: "Wee have taught ladies to blush, onely by hearing that named, which they nothing feare to doe". (H.D.S.)

22. *satiety...passion.* Cf. Marston, *Fawn*, IV. 1. 107–8: "Fie on this satiety, 'tis a dull, blunt, weary, and drowsy passion". Both passages are derived from Florio's Montaigne, II. 15: "Whereas satiety begets distaste: it is a dull, blunt, weary, and drowsy passion". (C.)

23. *buttery*: (O.Fr. *boterie* = *bouteillerie*; it has nothing to do with butter).

26–7. *guilder...quicke-silver.* Mercury used to be regularly used in one of the processes of gilding, though now largely superseded by electro-plating. It combines with gold to form a yellowish, buttery amalgam; when this has been applied to the required surface, the mercury is driven off by heat. The mercury-vapour is however liable to be absorbed through the lungs and cause mercurial poisoning; the symptoms of which range from "mercurial tremor" (resembling

general paralysis of the insane) to loss of memory, hysteria, and even acute mania. Thus Casanova found that medical treatment with the metal affected his mind and induced temporary fits of piety. For an appalling family-history from the gilder's trade, see Allbutt and Rolleston, *System of Medicine*, II. 1. 1006.

27. *liver*: the supposed seat of passion.

27. *Barriers*. There were three distinct kinds of "jousts of peace"—tilt, tourney, and barriers. The last was so called because in it opponents on foot fought *across* a waist-high barrier; not, as Sampson and others suggest, *within* barriers or lists.

The barrier appears to have been introduced into foot-combats about the end of the fifteenth century, so as to prevent wrestling and body-to-body fighting and make things altogether less perilous. In the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries the usual weapons were pike and sword. Thus in Jan. 1550 a certain Captain Julian with three Italians challenged all comers at barriers, for three pushes of pike and ten sword-strokes, in defence of the motion that "Love should be hanged". (Love was represented by a lady on a ladder set against a gallows, who went up one step every time a challenger was victorious, down one step every time one was defeated.) Again, in 1606 at the marriage of Essex, the Duke of Lennox with fifteen others, representing Truth, fought the Earl of Sussex with a like number who stood for Opinion—first one, then three, at a time; and on Twelfth Night 1610, Prince Henry (aged 15) and others fought at barriers from 10 p.m. till 3 a.m. in the Great Banqueting Hall at Whitehall. As the sport was possible in a small space, or in-doors, and by artificial light, it lent itself to the stage, as in Act v of this play. It may, too, have gained extra interest as an amusement nearing its end; for it became extinct early in the seventeenth century. (See *Archaeol. Journal*, LXI. 276 ff. for a fascinating article on the subject by Viscount Dillon, with excellent illustrations.)

28. *feathers*: plumes shorn from combatants' helmets.

28. *shed haires*, etc.: the usual Elizabethan imputation, dragged in on all possible occasions, of venereal disease, the mercurial treatment of which had this effect.

29–31. *Irish gamster...not more venterous*: *i.e.* Camillo would be as ready to stake his virility (having none) as any Irish gambler.

There can, I think, be no question that this is the meaning, though previous commentators seem not to have understood it. My last doubts were removed by a passage quoted by Sykes from Stanyhurst's *Description of Ireland* (ch. 8) in the first edition of Holinshed (1577), (*N.Q.* II. VII. 342).

Among the Irish, we are told, there is "a brotherhood of Karrowes, that profer to play at chartes (cards) all the yere long, and make it their onely occupation. They play away mantle and all to the bare skin, and then trusse themselves in straw or leaves...For default

of other stuffe, they paune theyr glibs (*i.e.* locks of hair on their foreheads), the nailes of their fingers and toes, *their dimissaries* (testicles), which they leese or redeeme at the curtesie of the wynner".

This, as Sykes points out, and *not* the passage copied from it in Barnaby Rich's *A new description of Ireland*, as assumed by Reed, Stoll, and Vaughan (Rich leaves out the essential part), must have been Webster's source. At the same time, "wage all downeward" clearly does not refer to the "glibs" and toenails, as Sykes suggests, but to the "dimissaries" which he omits from his quotation of the passage.

31–2. *dutch doublet*. Cf. Fynes Moryson, *Itinerary*, III. 4. 1 (of the Netherlands): "Their doublets are made close to the body, their breeches large". For *backe* see on *D.M.* II. 4. 72.

33. *Shrowd you*: shelter yourself. So in English of the time we read of Musketeers "shrouding themselves within their pikes" and of ships "shrowding themselves" in port.

39. *under-age protestation*: inexperienced wooing, calf-love.

41–4. From Florio's Montaigne, III. 5 (of marriage): "It may be compared to a cage, the birds without dispaire to get in, and those within dispaire to get out" (C.).

41. *summer bird-cage in a garden*. Cf. the ingenious Bacon's precepts "Of Gardens": "Over the *Arches* (of the hedge) let there bee an *Entire Hedge* of some foure foot High, framed also upon Carpenters Worke: And upon the *Upper Hedge*, over every *Arch*, a little *Turret*, with a *Belly*, enough to receive a *Cage* of *Birds*".

48. *Asse in's foot-cloath*: *i.e.* cloth housings which hung low down and protected the rider's feet from the mud. The expression may well be proverbial: cf. *Mar-Martin*, 6 (1589):

> Plucke but the foote cloth from his backe,
> The Asse will soone be seene.

But the comparison may imply also that we are to imagine Camillo dressed in a long flowing gown like a counsellor of state (cf. ll. 45–6). This would be in keeping with his character of pedant.

56. *flaw*: (1) squall, (2) crack, breach. Here, with the first sense; in the next line with both, as a *double entendre*.

66. *boule bootie*: explained by Sampson as meaning "to play badly on purpose, with the idea of leading an opponent on". But what then is the sense here? Brachiano is playing for Vittoria, not badly, but only too well; and what could he have gained by playing badly, anyway?

"Bootie" means primarily "spoil to be divided", "the common plunder": thence "to play bootie" is to play for spoil of this sort, *i.e.* in collusion with another or others, in order to defraud a third party. So here: Camillo rightly suspects Brachiano of being engaged in a conspiracy with Flamineo to play him false. The later sense of "playing badly on purpose" very naturally arises from this earli

one of "playing with conspiracy to defraud", because playing badly was one of the commonest methods (think, for example, of "pulling" a horse in a race).

For the sense of collusion, cf. Mabbe's translation of Aleman's *Guzman d'Alfarache*, I. 222: "We are three of us, let us all *play booty*, and *joyne together to coozen* the Cardinal"; so Heywood, *Woman Killed with Kindness* (Mermaid ed.), III. 2. And for the actual practice of it in Elizabethan bowling-alleys, see Dekker's *Belman of London* (Grosart), III. 135–6: "Many other practices there are in bowling tending to cozenage, but ye greatest and grossest is *Booty*: in which ye deceipt is so open and palpable that I have seene men stone-blind offer to lay *Betts* franckely, although they could see a Bowle no more than a post, onely by hearing who played and how the old *Grypes* (thieves' cant for men who bet fraudulently) had made their layes". For a fuller account see also a very curious passage in Greene's *Second Part of Conny-Catching* (Grosart), X. 82–5.

66. *cheeke*: has caused needless agony to commentators. Thus Sampson suggests "the French *chique*, a small ball or marble" or again "'check', a falconry term for swerving aside"—(hawks in a bowling-alley!).

The *cheeke* is simply Brachiano's cheek, which like the cheek or round face of a bowl is trying to creep up against the "mistress" or "jack"—Vittoria. For a similar comparison of the roundness of a cheek and the roundness of a bowl, cf. *Troil. and Cress.* IV. 5. 8–9:

> Blow, villain, till thy sphered *bias* cheek
> Outswell the colic of puff'd Aquilon.

67. *Bias*: the weight in the side of the bowl which makes it run in a curve.

68. *Jumpe with my mistris*: "run up against her", "come together with her". Again technical bowling terms. The whole game, indeed, was itself full of amatory metaphors ready to the Elizabethan dramatist's hand. Thus *Mistris* is another name for the jack or small white ball at which the bowls are aimed. For the same metaphor, cf. *Arcadia*, III. (*Works*, I. 437): "using her owne bias to bowle neer the mistresse of her owne thoughtes"; *Troil. and Cress.* III. 2. 50: "So, so; rub on and kiss the mistress". See *Sh.'s Eng.* II. 463–5.

H.D.S. compares also Shirley, *The Witty Fair One*, II. 2: "(He writes like) a bowling gamester too, for his bias was towards my mistress; but I may chance to cast a rub in his way, to keep him from kissing".

69. *Despight you*[r] *Aristotle*: "illogically" is Sampson's explanation. More probably, I think, "despite your knowledge of Aristotle"—with reference to Camillo's pedantic erudition—"are you, so great a scholar in philosophy, going to be so great a fool?"

69. *Cocould*. This term, found so incessantly in Elizabethan Drama, like *horns* below, is yet so ill-explained that it seems worth trying to make the matter a little clearer.

There can be no question, to begin with, that the word is a form of *cuckoo* (O.Fr. *cucuault* = cuckoo). Only as the cuckoo is the offender, which fathers its offspring on other birds, its name should logically be applied not to the injured husband, but to the adulterer. And so in fact it sometimes is. Thus in Latin *cucūlus*[1] is the lover (Plaut. *Asin.* 923, 934, etc.); and in Low[2] Latin *currūca* (? hedge-sparrow: one of the cuckoo's victims) means "cuckold". Similarly there are instances of the German *Kuckuk* and, possibly, the French *cocu* being used of the adulterer. In general, however, the term of abuse has become firmly transferred from the injurer to the injured; and the reason for this remains obscure. It may be merely an expression of the invincible human tendency to sympathize with the lover. Or (2) it may be due to a mistaken idea of the habits of the cuckoo, as though that bird were sinned against instead of sinning; thus the Scholiast on Hor. *Sat.* I. 7. 31 delightfully observes: "The cuckoo is a miserable bird, which has this natural weakness, that it forgets where it has laid its own eggs and sits on others that do not belong to it; hence it is a rustic term of abuse for those who bring up offspring not their own" (cf. Brand, *Pop. Antiq.* 420). This idea certainly squares better with the use of "cuckoo" = "simpleton", than the true facts about that only too astute bird.

Or again (3) the deceived husband may be termed a "cuckoo", as being a "simpleton" (though it is clear, I think, that there must also be some association with the parasitic habits of the cuckoo). Or (4) it may be because the female cuckoo haunts other birds' nests: or lastly (5) because "Cuckoo! Cuckoo!" was a cry of warning to the husband of the lover's approach and by this means became transferred to the husband himself.

The reader has thus his full choice of theories: but I do not think they are all mutually exclusive. Perhaps the most we can say is that the cuckoo's name became associated with injured husbands because it was a bird both disreputable in its parental relations and also for some reason supposed to be particularly stupid and gullible.

70. *Ephemerides*: astrological tables giving the positions of the planets etc. for every day of the year.

76. *God boy you*: "be with you". Acc. to *N.E.D.* such forms as this and "God buy you" probably have no connection, as some have thought, with "buy" = "redeem", but are simply contractions of "be with you".

77–8. *pillow Stuft.* Cf. *D.M.* IV. 2. 79; *Lear*, III. 4. 52.

78. *horne-shavings.* The connection of horns, as of cuckoos, with

[1] It has been maintained that *cucūlus also* means "cuckold", but the quotations are not convincing: and in Plaut. *Pseudolus*, 96, which has been claimed as decisive, the word means simply "you fool", "you ninny".

[2] The reading which inserts the word in Juv. *Sat.* VI. 276 is based only on an inferior MS.

cuckoldry is so often taken for granted in commentaries, that it seems worth while for once to try and explain it. For as Coleridge says on the Forester's Song in *As You Like It*, "I question whether there exists a parallel instance of a phrase that, like this of 'horns', is universal in all languages, and yet for which no one has discovered even a plausible origin". Of wildly unplausible origins there is indeed no end (cf. Brand, *Pop. Antiq.* 407). Goats and bulls; Bacchus and Venus Genetrix (= Astarte, the Moon); the Cornucopia; even elephants' tusks and crusaders' helmets have all been invoked in turn. At its first appearance in literature (in Artemidorus, *Oneirocritica*, II. 12 (second century A.D.)—where dreaming of being thrown from a ram's back signifies cuckoldry: cf. the Byzantine κερατᾶς, κερασφόρος), the phrase is already proverbial and taken for granted. On the other hand it cannot be as old as the time of Alexander and his successors, who represent themselves on their coins with horns as a sign of godhead (cf. Zeus Ammon, Dionysus, Moses); for they would hardly have braved the ludicrous associations of the emblem, had these already been current.

To take the saner theories one by one:

(1) It is suggested that "horns" are connected with the cornucopia or "horn of abundance", with allusion to the kind of husband who trades on his wife's infidelity. Cf. the epigram of Callicter (wrongly ascribed by Ménage, *Origines de la langue françoise*, *s.v.* "cornard", to Parmeno, by which he meant Parmenio), *Anthol. Pal.* XI. 5:

ὅστις ἔσω πυρὸς καταλαμβάνει οὐκ ἀγοράζων
κείνου Ἀμαλθείας ἡ γυνή ἐστι κέρας.

So in 2 *Hen. IV.* I. 2. 51 ff.: "he hath the horn of abundance, and the lightness of his wife shines through it". Cf. Middleton, *Fam. of Love*, II. 1. 6; Jonson, *Every Man in his Hum.* III. 3; Ford and Dekker, *The Sun's Darling*, IV. 1; Ford, *Broken Heart*, II. 1.

But this, after all, is a very special and abnormal form of cuckoldry and these Elizabethan passages seem rather combinations of two distinct associations of "horns" than proofs of their original identity.

(2) The he-goat has been supposed to feel no jealousy. Statements about the scientific truth of this are not only contradictory, but quite irrelevant, since it has certainly been widely *believed* to be true; so that the Spanish *cabron* (he-goat) is used of a complaisant husband and, in Chili, of a brothel-keeper. Similarly the Italian *becco* (*bouc*) and the Turkish *ghidi* (Ménage, *loc. cit.*) have the meaning "cuckold".

(3) Dunger (*Germania*, XXIX), quoted by *N.E.D.* *s.v.* "horn" sb.?, derives the metaphor from the practice of grafting the spurs of castrated cocks on the root of the excised comb, where they grow and become horns. (Cf. Germ. *Hahnrei*, "capon", which also means "cuckold".)

Of these three explanations, the first seems highly improbable, the other two possible; the third indeed would be perhaps the most

plausible if it could be established that this extraordinary grafting of capons was as old as the Roman Empire and as widely established: which is asking a good deal.

And yet it seems also possible, as with "cuckold", that the term was originally a mere implication of beast-like *stupidity*. Cf. the French "*mettre les cornes à un enfant*", which consists in putting two paper horns behind a dunce's ears (like the ass's ears of Midas). Cf. too the horns which grow on and off people's heads in fairy tales; and the late Latin use of *cucurbita* = "cuckold" (also a verb, *cucurbitare*), its earlier meanings being (1) "gourd", (2) "blockhead". (See especially *N.Q.* 1. II. 90; 8. IV. 349 and 477.)

83. *Leon*: usually spelt *lyam* (Lat. *ligamen*, Fr. *lien*)—"leash." For variant spellings see Text. Note.

88. *where my night-cap wringes mee*: where the shoe of my jealousy pinches.

Cf. *W.Ho!* 1. 1 (p. 76): "put case that this nightcap be too little for my ears or forehead, can any man tell me where my nightcap wrings me, except I be such an ass to proclaim it?" Cf. too the story in Plutarch, *Life of Aemilius Paulus*, 5, of the Roman who, being asked why he was divorcing his wife, replied by stretching out his foot and showing his shoe, with the words: "It is neat, is it not? And new? Yet none of you knows where it pinches my foot".

88 ff. Note the sudden increase of speed and excitement produced by this prose with its numerous short syllables.

89. *large eares*. Cf. *D.M.* II. 1. 5.

91–2. From Montaigne, II. 8: "more willingly and gloriously chaste, by how much fairer they are". (C.)

93. *Mathematically jealous*: *i.e.* scientifically precise in jealousy (cf. "*Jacobs* staffe").

94. *Jacobs staffe*: a mathematical instrument for measuring altitudes, or distances, consisting of a staff with cross-piece, like a pilgrim's staff; whence the name, the symbols of St James of Compostella being a pilgrim's staff and a scallop-shell. It was rather like a cross-bow in appearance, as is well brought out in an epigram by the younger Donne:

> An astrologian in a moonshine night,
> Taking the altitude of a star's height
> With's Jacob's staff erected towards the sky,
> It chanc'd a meteor fell down instantly;
> At which the country clown a great shout making,
> His Jacob's staff then for a cross-bow taking,
> Thinking he'd hit a star, unto him saith,
> "Thou'rt a brave marksman, O well shot i' faith!"

95–6. *inclosures for paltry mutton . . . rebellion*. "Mutton" is Elizabethan slang for loose women. But the whole phrase is also a clear allusion to the hated enclosures of common land by rich landowners to make

pasture for sheep, such as caused a minor peasants' rising in Warwickshire and Leicestershire in 1607 and involved Shakespeare himself in trouble at Welcombe in 1614. Cf. the ballad of "Now a Dayes" (Furnivall's *Ballads from MSS.* I. 97—first half of sixteenth century):

> Commons to close and kepe,
> Poor folks for bread to cry and wepe,
> Towns pulled down to pastur shepe—
> This is the new gyse.

And again the popular song of 1598, quoted in *Sh.'s Eng.* I. 363:

> Sheep have eat up our Meadows and our Downs,
> Our Corn, our Woods, whole Villages and Towns...
> Till now I thought the Proverb did but jest
> Which said a black Sheep was a biting beast.

97. *electuaries*: medicinal pastes made with a basis of honey or syrup. Here, of course, aphrodisiacs.

97. *last Jubilee*. The year of Jubilee was instituted by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300, as a sacred period during which certain acts of piety could obtain a plenary indulgence. The interval between Jubilees was later shortened from a hundred to fifty and (1450) twenty-five years. The last for Webster was, of course, 1600.

100–1. *paire of spectacles...perspective art*: *i.e.* multiplying glasses, cut into a number of facets each giving a separate image. Sampson quotes from R. Scott's *Discoverie of witchcraft* (1584), XIII. xix. an allusion to glasses cut by "art perspective" so that "one image shall seem to be one hundred". The illusion is produced naturally by some specimens of Iceland spar.

This sense is to be kept distinct from the use of "perspective" to mean "telescope" (*D.M.* IV. 2. 78); and also from the Elizabethan fashion of trick-pictures or "perspectives", which were only to be looked at from one view-point and from all others seemed grotesquely distorted. A portrait of Edward VI of this nature is in the National Portrait Gallery and is reproduced in *Sh.'s Eng.* II. opposite p. 10.

108–9. From Montaigne, II. 12: "Such as are troubled with the yellow jandise deeme all things they looke upon to be yellowish". (C.) Cf. too Nash, *Unfortunate Traveller* (ed. Brett-Smith), p. 71 (H.D.S.).

115. *Ida*: the sacred mountain (4650 ft.) which dominates the plains of Troy.

115. *Ivorie of Corinth*: I know no particular reason for connecting ivory with Corinth, though, of course, that city was a great trading centre in antiquity. Perhaps Webster was confusing it with the famous Corinthian *bronze*, supposed to have been accidentally discovered by the molten metals running together in the streets when Corinth was sacked (146 B.C.).

116–7. *her haire...blacke birds feather*: Queen Elizabeth being fair, dark hair had become almost a deformity in Elizabethan eyes. So in *Mids. Night's Dream*, III. 2 Demetrius calls the dark Hermia

"Ethiop" and "tawny Tartar". For this turning of traditional compliment into ironic insult here, cf. Shakespeare to his Dark Lady (*Sonnets*, cxxx. 3–4):

> If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun,
> If hair be wires, black wires grow on her head—

(with allusion to the traditional comparison of golden hair to golden wire).

120. *a loofe*: originally "to windward", "away from a lee-shore" (cf. "to luff").

121. The brackets here and below, as commonly in Elizabethan English, denote asides.

123. *I carved to him*. "Carving" was the term for a curious Elizabethan manner of making advances by signalling with the fingers—a sort of digitary ogle.

Cf. *Merry Wives*, 1. 3. 47–8 (Falstaff of Ford's wife): "she carves, she gives the leer of invitation"; and see Hart's note in the *Arden Shakesp.* Cf. too *Comedy of Errors*, II. 2. 121–2:

> That never meat sweet-savour'd in thy taste,
> Unless I spake, or look'd, or touch'd, or carv'd to thee.

Similarly, *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 2. 324 (with Furness's note in the *Variorum Sh.*).

But perhaps the most enlightening passage is that quoted by Grant White (*Shakespeare's Scholar*, p. xxxiii) from "Overbury's" *Characters*—"A Very Woman": "Her lightnesse gets her to swim at top of the table where *her wrie little finger* bewraies *carving*; her neighbors at the latter end know they are welcome, for that purpose she quencheth her thirst". Which suggests a sort of motion of the little finger backwards and forwards, not unlike carving, as the wineglass was raised to the lips.

125. *carved*: with a play on the sense of "castrated".

128. *blacke guard*: kitchen menials, scullions, coal-carriers. Cf. *D.M.* II. 2. 67 and Gifford's *Jonson* (1816), II. 169; VII. 250. It was a term in quite ordinary use. And we find Chamberlain writing to Carleton on March 2nd 1614 of a certain promotion—"all the officers in court, even to the black guard, seemed to take it to heart that such an indignity should be offered, and such a scandalous fellow set over them".

130. *tickle*: "excite", "stir up". *N.E.D.* quotes Bauldwin, *Mor. Philos.* 116: "Some men there be, whom bodily lust tickleth not at all". Or, less probably, "make her smart".

134. *glasse house*. This glass-factory with its undying fire which so kindled Webster's imagination (cf. *D.M.* II. 2. 6; *W.Ho!* II. 1; *A.Y.L.* I. 1. 323) was doubtless one which stood near the Blackfriars Theatre. Cf. Dekker, *A Knight's Conjuring* (1607) (Percy Soc. ed.), p. 21: "like the Glasse-house Furnace in Blacke-friers, the bone-

fires that are kept there, never goe out inasmuch that all the inhabitants are almost broiled like carbonadoes with the sweating sickness". Also "Chapman", *Chabot*, III. 1. 29–31. (See Wheatley, *London Past and Present*, II. 115.)

Even a century later this perpetuity of the glass-house fires was still a byword, so that Addison (*Spectator*, 72), describing with humorous exaggeration the Everlasting Club, writes: "They have an old woman in the nature of a vestal, whose business it is to cherish and perpetuate the fire which burns from generation to generation, and has seen the glass-house fires in and out above an hundred times".

It would be absurd to lay much stress here on the "seaven yeares"; but it is just worth remarking that the first *Englishman* granted a patent to make glass was Sir J. Bowes (Oct. 6th 1606—cf. Dekker's allusion in 1607 and another to glass-making as a source of wealth in *Volpone*, I. 1, also published 1607). In 1611 an extra patent for making the commoner kinds of glass, with coal and not wood, was given to Sir E. Zouch; and he was so successful as to displace Bowes in 1613. In 1612, then, Bowes's fires had been burning close on seven years; and Zouch's new patent and success may have been exciting public interest.

There is always a possibility that Webster may have derived some of his Italian information from this source. Cf. J. Howell, *Letters* (1890), I. 10 (of the Glass-house in Broad St.): "The small time I supervis'd the Glass-house, I got among those Venetians some smatterings of the Italian tongue" (March 20th 1618).

136–7. From Middleton's *Michaelmas Term* (1607), II. 3. 13: "how does he appear to me when his white satin suit's on, but like a maggot crept out of a nut shell—a fair body and a foul neck?"

138. *Foile*: a thin leaf of metal (*e.g.* silvered copper coated with transparent colours mixed with isinglass) used to enhance the lustre of the transparent gem set upon it; hence, any jewel-setting.

138. *coverd...stone*: of course a *double entendre*.

144. Again with a double meaning; like 146 below. Cf. *D.L.* IV. 2. 255–6.

146. *philosophers stone*: which changed base metals to gold; hence Camillo's reply about Alchemy. For the *double entendre* cf. Lyly, *Gallathea*, V. 1. 24–6.

149–50. *smothered in roses*. H.D.S. explains the allusion by a quotation from Goulart, *Histoires Admirables* (Grimeston's transl. 1607), p. 458: "Martin Cromer, liber 8 of the History of Poland, doth witnesse that a Bishop of Breslawe, named Lawrence, was smothered with the smell of roses". But it is not here a question of smell and the idea was doubtless proverbial. H.D.S. himself quotes Nash's *Unfort. Trav.* (ed. Brett-Smith), p. 40: "Those who were condemned to be smothered to death by sincking downe into the softe bottome of an high built bedde of Roses, never dide so sweet a death...".

150–2. From Montaigne, II. 13: "As they who travell by sea, to whom mountains, fields, townes, heaven and earth, seeme to goe the same motion, and keepe the same course they doe". Cf. Jonson, *Forest*, XI:

> Peace, Luxury, thou art like one of those
> Who, being at sea, suppose
> Because they move, the continent doth so.

(C.) (See also Montaigne, II. 12, p. 352 in *World's Classics*.)

R. Brooke (*J. Webster*, p. 152) remarks on this: "Note, though, that Montaigne has made a slip. They (*i.e.* the mountains, fields, etc.) really appear to be moving in the opposite direction to yourself. Webster takes the idea over, mistake and all". But the mistake is really Brooke's. When one is moving through a landscape, the *nearer* objects do indeed seem to move past one in the *opposite* direction but so much more rapidly than the *remoter* ones, that these seem to move the *same* way as one is going. Thus when we are in a train, the telegraph-posts seem dashing the opposite way, but the distant hill appears to accompany us. Cf. Tennyson, *Holy Grail*:

> Seven days I drove along the dreary deep,
> And *with me drove* the moon and all the stars.

153. *nayles of dyamonds...necessitie*. Sampson recalls the adamantine spindle of Necessity which holds together the celestial spheres in Plato, *Rep.* x. But nails are not spindles; and the source is doubtless Horace, *Odes*, III. 24. 5–8 (cf. I. 35. 18):

> Si figit adamantinos
> Summis verticibus dira Necessitas
> Clavos, non animum metu,
> Non mortis laqueis expedies caput.

("Summis verticibus" probably refers to the top of the mansion which, unconscious of his doom, the rich man is building.) This idea of the nails of Necessity appears to be Etruscan in origin, and is illustrated by an Etruscan mirror from Perugia where Athrpa (Atropos, Fate) is, Jael-like, driving her nail into the doomed head of the Boar of Calydon; and by a sarcophagus in the British Museum on which the goddess is depicted with her hammer and nail. See Gow on *Odes*, III. 24. 5–8. It is characteristic of Webster's somewhat precarious erudition to transfix Necessity with her own nails.

155. *brees*: "gadflies". The absence of the article shows that *brees* must be the plural, though the singular is the same in form. Cf. Pliny (Holland) I. 329: "Certain brees and horse-flies come of it"; and see Text. Note.

155. *gadding*. This is a passage which might be used to support the not very convincing theory that to "gad about" means originally "to rush about as if stung by a gad-fly". (See *N.E.D.* "gad" v.², 1 *b*.)

155. *presentlie*: at once.

156. *comming*: on-coming.

161. *tumultuary*. An adj. applied originally to hasty levies of troops raised for some emergency (*tumultus*); hence "irregular, untried, untested, hurriedly formed". Cf. Daniel, *Coll. Hist. Eng.* 22: "content with a tumultuarie learning"; Montaigne 1. 56: "So serious and venerable a study should not by way of pastime and tumultuarie (*i.e.* tumultuarily) be handled".

162. *quae negata grata*: "what's refused is desired". Cf. the Italian proverb dear to Schopenhauer, "Chi non stima, vien stimato", "He that shows disesteem, acquires esteem".

163. *Adamant*: loadstone, magnet. The meanings of the word have been confused by false etymology. It has two main connotations: (1) from its true derivation (ἀ, not: δαμάω, overcome)—invincible *hardness*; (2) by false derivation from the Latin *ad-amare*, feel attraction for—magnetic *attraction*. Hence "adamant" may mean the *hardest* metal (steel) or the *hardest* stone (diamond); or, on the other hand, *magnetic* stone (magnetic iron-ore). And the two ideas are inevitably confused in use.

168. *as a man would say*. It is possible, but not I think very likely, that *man* is meant to be stressed here as a piece of unconscious irony in the mouth of the unmanly Camillo.

170–1. *silkeworme...fast every third day*. The silkworm really does not begin to spin until it has given up eating altogether; it is however true that previously to this its appetite flags periodically before each moulting of its skin and returns with increased keenness after it. The far-fetched parallel with "unnatural history" recalls *Euphues*.

Silkworms were a subject of some interest about this time as there was some hope of founding a silk-industry in England. James I himself kept them and tried unsuccessfully to encourage their cultivation, enjoining his subjects, in a speech from the throne, to plant mulberry trees. See *N.Q.* 11. xi. 376; and cf. *A.Q.L.* 1. 1. 69 ff.

177. *take the key*: Webster is overfond of this childish device of making characters lock themselves in to their own undoing. Cf. *D.M.* v. 4.

187. From Montaigne, III. 13: "(the mind) uncessantly goeth turning, winding, building, and entangling her selfe in hir owne worke, as doe our silke-wormes". (H.D.S.)

188–90. *women...curst dogges*. Cf. *D.M.* IV. 1. 15. The source is Montaigne, III. 5: "Beleeve it, they [*i.e.* women] will have fire: *Luxuria ipsis vinculis, sicut fera bestia, irritata, deinde emissa*: Luxurie is like a wild beast, first made fiercer with tying, and then let loose" (C.).

188. *curst*: "vicious". Cf. Bingham, *Xenophon*, 101 (1623): "Dogges that are curst, men use to tie up in the day, and let loose in the night".

189. *civilitie*: considerations of order and decency. See Text. Note.

192–259. For the staging of this episode we must, I think, imagine Vittoria and Brachiano alone in the "study", Flamineo and Zanche *nearer* the audience on one side of the outer stage, Cornelia on its other side, opposite them, and perhaps hidden from them by an entrance-hanging. Thus we have the two protagonists in the centre,

and the watching figures, making their comments of exultation or misery almost like two sections of a Greek chorus, on either side.

197. *if you forego me.* Note the stress the metre lays on *you.*

forego: forsake.

223. *Eu*: "yew" (with a play, in the lines that follow, on "you"). It is curious that this same pun recurs in Lyly, *Sapho and Phao*, III. 4. 75–9, followed three pages later by an allegorical dream related by the lovesick Sapho about "a tall Caedar".

226. *Checkered with crosse-sticks.* Brereton suggests that the checkered shadow of a latticed fence in the moonlight is meant. But it is too elaborate to expect an audience suddenly to supply moons and latticed fences out of their heads without any previous hint of either. Sampson's "crosses stuck in the grave" is far simpler and quite adequate. A graveyard with a number of small crosses, such as a war-cemetery in France used to be, gives I think the impression Webster means.

232 ff. Here Vittoria's allegory becomes very obscure. What is signified by Vittoria's rooting up the Yew (Brachiano) and planting a blackthorn? Is the Yew here Brachiano's good name, which she is plotting to change to a thing of shame (the blackthorn)? But later on the Yew certainly stands for Brachiano himself. Or does the withered blackthorn destined to be planted in the churchyard mean Camillo, whose death is being planned, while the Yew Brachiano is to be carried away to a new life with Vittoria? I do not think we can press any interpretation; it may be that Vittoria does not intend her dream to be too clear. And Webster's apologues have a habit of being extremely hard to apply. Cf. IV. 2. 224 ff.; *D.M.* III. 5. 149 ff.

252. *envy* has here still, in part at least, its old sense of "enmity". (Lat. *invidia*, "looking evilly upon".)

Cf. Habington, *Queen of Aragon*, II. 1:

> Misfortune brings
> Sorrow enough; 'tis envy to ourselves
> T' augment it by prediction.

255–7. *nor shall government...keepe you great*: *i.e.* the business of government shall preoccupy my mind only so far as my care to keep you great requires.

258–9. There is a wonderful effectiveness in this sudden completion of the couplet, as by the voice of destiny, with a rhyme that brings chiming together two thoughts that clash with all the violence of irreconcilable passion.

262. *on a flower here, tell now.* Note how metre and punctuation stress *here*: *tell*, of course, = "till".

263–4. There can hardly be a more hideous sneer in literature than this of Flamineo's at his mother's faded beauty. We seem suddenly in the midst of Dante's Hell, amid those voices which—

> Bestemmiavano Iddio e lor parenti,
> l'umana specie, il luogo, il tempo, e il seme
> di lor semenza e di lor nascimenti.

265. *Thessaly*: famous in classical literature for its witches. Cf., for instance, the turbid splendour of Lucan's lines—VI. 438 ff.:

> Thessala quin etiam tellus herbasque nocentis
> Rupibus ingenuit sensuraque saxa canentis
> Arcanum ferale Magos. Ibi plurima surgunt
> Vim factura deis. Et terris hospita Colchis
> Legit in Haemoniis quas non advexerat herbas.

271. *fre[qu]ently*: a good example of the damage time can do even to a classic. The line has become to the modern ear inevitably banal, however much we remember that *frequently* means here something much stronger—"incessantly", "repeatedly".

279. *Princes...dyals*. Perhaps there is here a reminiscence of the Spanish monk Antonio de Guevara's *Reloj de Príncipes*, which was translated into English by Sir T. North, among others, in 1557 as *The Dial of Princes*. It became one of the most influential works of the century and largely affected Lyly's *Euphues*. It was a romantic life of Marcus Aurelius, after the manner of Xenophon's *Cyropedia*, meant to serve as the model of a perfect prince.

dyals: clocks or sundials? It can mean either. Sundials are indeed much more infallible; but *move* is more appropriate to clocks.

292. *envied*: hated. Cf. 252 above. (H.D.S.)

299. *prodigious*: portending disaster, like a prodigy.

306–7. *beare my beard...Stirop*: *i.e.* cease to walk at my lord's stirrup like a footman. Cf. *D.M.* III. 2. 270.

315. *heele my Tutors stockings*. It was the regular thing for the poorer scholars at the University to beg their living or earn it by becoming the servants of Masters or richer students. At Oxford, for instance, there was a class of Batlers or Battelers who waited on the Fellows of the College who had nominated them. (See Rashdall, *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, II. 656–8.)

336–8. *Lycurgus* etc.: Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15. Perhaps a passage from Webster's commonplace-book, for it is somewhat dragged in here.

338. *Their faire wives*. The metre logically stresses *wives*—Their faire *wives* | to be bar | ren—Mis | ery of mis | eries!

343. *crooke*: rare for "crooked" except in compounds. *N.E.D.* gives one example from the seventeenth century.

343. *forced bankes*: banks imposed, forced, upon them.

II. 1.

Outer stage.

5. *Pole-cats*: an animal (of which the common ferret is an albino variety) particularly fond of pigeons and poultry, whence perhaps its name (O.Fr. *pole*, *poule*—chicken). Owing to its fetid smell, "polecat" became a general term of abuse (*e.g.* Harvey calls Nash "the poulcat of Paul's churchyard"), though applied particularly to prostitutes. (See Hart on *Merry Wives*, IV. 1. 30 in the *Arden Sh.*)

14. *Unicornes horne.* This fabulous antidote is discussed at delightful length in Sir T. Browne, *Pseudodoxia*, III. 23. ("With what security a man may rely on this remedy, the mistress of fools hath already instructed some, and to wisdom (which is never too wise to learn) it is not too late to consider.") The idea that drinking-cups made of unicorn's horn would prevent poisoning is as old as the first mention of the Unicorn itself in an interesting passage of Ctesias, *Indica* (Baehr), p. 254. We hear of it being sold in Renaissance Italy at 1536 crowns an ounce, when gold itself was worth only 140 crowns; and Pope Julius III bought a whole horn at vast expense.

Topsell (*Four-footed Beasts*) says: "His horn being put in the water, driveth away the poison, that he may drink without harm if any venomous beast shall drink therein before him.... The horn of this beast being put upon the table of kings, and set among their junkets and banquets, doth bewray the venom (if there be any such therein) by a certain sweat which cometh over it. There are found in Europe to the number of twenty of these horns pure, and so many broken".

The Prince of Anhalt saw two at Windsor in 1596; one of which, according to another traveller, was worth £100,000 (W. B. Rye, *England as seen by Foreigners*, 202). There is a pleasant verse on this subject in Weelkes's *Ayres or Phantasticke Spirites* (1606):

> Ha, ha, ha, ha! this world doth pass
> Most merrily I'll be sworn;
> For many an honest Indian Ass
> Goes for an Unicorn.

As late as the Revolution, according to the *Encycl. Brit.*, the horn was used to test the royal food at the Court of France.

37–8. *sting... Adders tayle.* Cf. Maplet, *Greene Forest* (quoted in *Sh.'s Eng.* I. 492): "it (the adder) is reported...to hurt both with tooth and mouth, and also with his hinder part or taile".

47. *like yong hawkes fetch a course about.* Cf. Turberville, *Booke of Falconrie* (1611 ed.), p. 126: "For most commonly if a yong hawke bee let flee at olde game, shee will turn tayle, and cowardly give it over".

50–2. Cf. *ibid.* p. 82: "if after your Hawke have flowen the Hearon, you should let her flee any other sleighter fowle or prey, Shee will lightly (by your owne default) become a slugge and take disdaine, in such sorte that (where before shee was a good Hearoner) shee will bee so no more, and will *turn to her owne ease*.... Forasmuch as shee will give herselfe to prey upon fowle, that is more easie to reach, and will forget or foreslow her valiant hardinesse".

57. *cloth of Tissue*: rich stuff, often woven with gold or silver thread.

62. *were she a whore of mine*—with stress on *were, i.e. even* if she were.

63. *borrowed*: mercenary.

65. *supplant*: overthrow (Lat. *sub, planta* (sole of the foot); and so, originally, "to trip up").

69. *Thou hadst given a soule to God then.* Is this a momentary admission

of Isabella's goodness, the unwilling testimony of a devil to the things of God? Or a sneer at the saintliness of one who would have made a fitter bride for Christ than for Brachiano?

> For who loves me must have some touch of earth,
> The low sun makes the colour.

Cf. Gloucester's gibe on the dead Henry VI (*Rich. III*, I. 2. 105):

> *Anne.* O he was gentle, mild, and virtuous.
> *Glouc.* The fitter for the King of heaven, that hath him.

This may seem strained to some; but Brachiano's preceding and following speeches are so bitterly hostile, that it is hard to conceive him making any conciliatory admission here; even allowing for the Elizabethan stage-convention, emphasized by Schücking, of making characters comment on one another in a way that will help to inform the audience even at the expense of consistency in themselves.

79. *plaisters*: "seemingly a reference to the ulcerous malady which afflicted the real Brachiano" (Sampson). But how could an audience possibly understand such an allusion to facts of which they knew nothing? It is merely one more of the eternal Elizabethan references to venereal disease following indulgence (cf. "perfumes").

81. *Your new-plow'd fore-head*: a sneer at the angry wrinkles on Francisco's brow. But see Text. Note. Webster is probably echoing *Jul. Caes.* IV. 3. 43–4 (Brutus to Cassius):

> Go, show your slaves how choleric you are,
> And make your bondmen tremble. Must I budge?

85–6. *Triumph*. . . *Lyon*: with allusion to the beast-fights which accompanied a Roman triumph.

88. *leavyes 'gainst the Pyrates*. Cf. Hist. Introd. p. 87.

91. *proling*: prowling.

90–4. This "tale of a tub" appears to have stunned the commentators into complete silence. I can only suggest that it is an attack on Brachiano's general loose-living; that *wild-duckes* is slang for "prostitutes" (not in *N.E.D.*; but cf. *Troil. and Cress.* III. 2. 54: "all the ducks i' the river" and the use of *quail* in this sense); and that "Stagges grow melancholike" here, not, as Sampson idyllically suggests (comparing *As You Like It*, II. 1. 33–43), at the approach of death, but of the rutting-season; or perhaps at its close. For *moulting time* and *tub* as further hints at venereal disease, cf. I. 2. 27 above and *Char.* "Improvident Young Gallant", 19.

96. *tale of a tub*: cock-and-bull story. The phrase is not derived, as has been suggested, from the supposed mariners' habit of throwing tubs to whales; but from a story in Apuleius, *Met.* IX. 5–7, copied by Boccaccio in the *Decameron* (7th day, 2nd *novella*), about a wife who hid her lover in a large jar and, when the husband discovered him there, pretended that he had got inside to examine it with a view to purchase. (See *N.Q.* I. IV. 242.) The phrase was already

current in the time of Sir Thomas More who made of it a punning jest at the expense of the veracity of an attorney called Tubb.

97. *to expresse the Sonnet by naturall reason*: obscure. It may mean: "to give a commonsense explanation to my rhyme" (*Sonnet* can be applied to any short piece of verse).

99. *a Champion*: doubtless Giovanni enters wearing the suit of armour his uncle had ordered Marcello to provide for him at 8 above.

112 ff. Parallels are certainly not needed to the idea of children playing at soldiers. Yet it remains possible that Webster was here thinking of the young Prince Henry, whose dirge he wrote in 1612, and whose childish preference for arms over books had struck contemporaries. Asked as a boy what musical instrument he preferred, he answered instantly—"A trumpet"; and he had been trained like Giovanni to handle and toss a pike. (Cf. Giovanni's boast of charging the *French* foe, just as the young Prince Henry was avowedly eager to emulate his namesake of Agincourt: and the account of the boy given by the French Ambassador, de la Boderie (Oct. 31st 1606): "He studies two hours and employs the rest of his time in tossing the pike, or leaping, or shooting with the bow, or throwing the bar, or vaulting, or some other exercise of that kind".)

114. *Homers frogges*: *i.e.* in the *Batrachomyomachia* or *Battle of Frogs and Mice*, a burlesque epic, attributed to Homer, but probably by Pigres of Halicarnassus (fourth cent. B.C.).

> These words put all in arms; and mallow leaves
> They drew upon their legs, for arming greaves.
> Their curets broad, green beets; their bucklers were
> Good thick-leaved cabbage, proof 'gainst any spear;
> *Their spears sharp bulrushes....*
>
> (Trans. Chapman.)

Was Webster thinking too of Heywood's *Four Prentices of London* (printed 1615, but acted 15–6 years earlier) (*Wks.* II. 203)?—

> But I *Achilles*, proud ambitious boy,
> Will drag thy coarse about the Wals of *Troy*:
> Give me thy Pike, Ile tosse it like a reed,
> And with this bul-rush make mine enemy bleed.

It seems just possible.

119–28. Cf. *D.M.* I. 1. 95 ff. H.D.S. points out that there is a rather similar discussion of the question in Montaigne, II. 21.

122. *danske*: "usually explained as 'Danish', but without any obvious reason", says Sampson, who with much less reason explains it as "of Dantzig". The reason for "Danish" is really clear enough; for Denmark was a great place for drums. Cf. the description of the King's revels in *Hamlet*, I. 4. 11–2:

> The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
> The triumph of his pledge.

On which Douce (see Furness, *Variorum Sh. ad loc.*) quotes Cleaveland's *Fuscara*:

> Tuning his draughts with drowsie hums
> As Danes carouse by kettle-drums.

Again, at Queen Anne's royal entry into London in 1604 Danish music in honour of her nationality was played by nine trumpets and kettledrums close to St Mildred's, Poultry.

124–6. Stoll justly compares the youthful boasts of Prince Edward in *Rich. III*, III. 1. 91–3; of the other Prince Edward in 3 *Hen. VI*; of Macduff's son; and of little Marcius. But there was also, nearer home, the parallel of Prince Henry (see on 112 above). From this point of view the words "if I live" are striking: why this doubt, only too well justified by the young prince's death in November 1612? Coincidence? Or is it that the words were really written after the blow had fallen and that Giovanni is a portrait of the dead? The dates make this just possible, though only just.

128. *Forward Lap-wing*. The lapwing is a regular Elizabethan type of precocity; cf. Meres, *Wit's Treasury*: "As the lapwing runneth away with the shell on her head as soon as she is hatched"; *Hamlet*, v. 2, 193–4 (of Osric); Jonson, *Staple of News*, III. 1; Glapthorne (?), *Revenge for Honour*, II. 1. 30 ff.:

> Boldness inforces youth to hard achievements
> Before their time, makes them run forth like lapwings
> From their warm nest, part of the shell yet sticking
> Unto their downy heads.

Most Elizabethan children tend indeed to be only too lapwing-like: cf. the precocious jests of Macduff's son in *Macbeth*, IV. 2 and of little York in *Rich. III*, II. 4; III. 1.

145–6. *Lodowicke... Pyrate*. Cf. Hist. Introd. p. 88.

153–4. *Devotion*: Isabella means, to her husband: Brachiano chooses to think she means, to religion.

164. *Italian*: Italians being proverbially jealous. Cf. Burton, *Anat. of Mel.* 3. 3. 1. 2: "Germany hath not so many drunkards, England tobacconists, France dancers, Holland mariners, as Italy alone hath jealous husbands"; and *C.C.* v. 1. 259: "the Italian plague".

169. *Cassia*: a coarser kind of cinnamon.

175. *bandy factions*: form leagues.

183. *the corpulent Duke*: the fatness of the historic Bracciano is, as Sampson points out, apparently transferred here to his Medicean brother-in-law.

184. *the great Duke*: a sneer at Francisco's title of Grand Duke of Tuscany. It had been first conferred on his father Cosimo by Pius V in 1567; and recognized as Francisco's by Maximilian II in 1576.

185. Cf. *D.M.* I. 1. 155.

187. *shav'd Pollake*: cf. Fynes Moryson, *Itin.* III. 4. 1: "The Polonians shave all their heads close, excepting the haire of the forehead

which they nourish very long and cast back to the hinder part of the head".

191. *flye-boate*: (1) a fast-sailing merchantman; (2) a frigate; (3) a pinnace. Here, where B. is being contemptuous, the third is probably meant. See Hist. Introd. p. 87.

205. *satisfied*: released, put away. Cf. *D.M.* v. 2. 259. (H.D.S.)

246. *my apprehended wishes*: the desires I am conscious of.

247. *whip some with scorpions*. Cf. *D.M.* II. 5. 101. The idea comes of course from *I Kings* xii. 11—Rehoboam's threat to Israel. The commentators there are divided whether the Hebrew word means the creature itself, or scourges armed with barbed points (cf. Lat. *scorpio*). Poetically, at all events, there can be no doubt that the first is preferable.

251. *Mummia*: see on I. 1. 16.

252–3. Cf. *D.M.* II. 5. 97–9.

265. *manet alta mente [repostum]*. Virg. *Aen.* I. 26: "It abides deep buried in my heart". Perhaps a curious relic of the real story of Vittoria (see Hist. Introd. p. 82). It is dangerous however to assume this (as Stoll does), at a time when every educated man had some classical tags in his head. I have, for instance, found this very phrase twice in letters from Chamberlain to Carleton (Nov. 9th 1616; Nov. 8th 1617), applied to a deep-rooted prejudice in the King's mind against Sir Edward Coke, then in disfavour. And in the following century, it recurs in the bitter remark of Chamfort: "j'ai été une fois empoisonné avec de l'arsenic sucré, je ne le serai plus: *Manet alta mente repostum*".

275. *turne in post*: return post-haste, like a courier.

278–9. The inverted commas are not, as Stoll imagines, marks of quotation, but merely a common Elizabethan way of marking some striking aphorism. In such cases it was usual to leave the inverted commas unclosed. Cf. *Meas. for Meas.* II. 4. 185–6:

> Then Isabell live chaste, and brother die;
> "More than our Brother, is our Chastitie.
>
> (P. Simpson, *Shakespearean Punctuation.*)

The same function was sometimes fulfilled by a pointing hand in the margin. Cf. *Arcadia* (*Wks.* I. 119): "like a hand in the margine of a Booke, to note some saying worthy to be marked".

279. Cf. Seneca, *Phaedra* (not *Hippolytus*, as editors persist in miscalling the play), 607:

> Curae leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.
> 'Tis shallow griefs that speak, the deep are dumb.

The Elizabethans seem never to weary of echoing it: cf. *e.g. Sir T. Wyat*, p. 55; *Sir T. More* (ed. Dyce, p. 87); *The Revenger's Tragedy*, I. 4; *Macbeth*, IV. 3. 209–10; Ford, *Broken Heart*, v. 3; Chapman, *Widow's Tears*, IV. 1. 104–5.

285. *stibium*: antimony, which produces similar symptoms of poisoning to arsenic.

285. *Cantarides*: the wing-cases of the Spanish fly, *Cantharis vesicatoria*, are used to make the drug of this name. Taken internally, it is a deadly poison in all but the smallest doses; externally, it raises blisters and is used as a counter-irritant. But although in such cases a small quantity is absorbed through the skin, Webster exaggerates its deadliness when he talks of it "working to the heart".

289–90. *send him to Candy*: *i.e.* to perdition. Cf. "Beaum. and Fl.", *The Double Marriage* (*c.* 1620), II. 3:

> Her men are gone to Candy; they are peppered.

There is certainly no question of "sugar-candy" or "having him preserved", as Sampson suggests. The deadliness of Candy might be explained by the abundance of Turkish pirates in Levantine waters. But the real clue is, I think, a sentence in Nash's *Unfortunate Traveller* (ed. Brett-Smith, p. 94): "He is not fit to travel that cannot with the Candians live on serpents, make nourishing food even of poison"—(a curious inversion of the ancient belief that Crete, like Ireland, held *no* venomous beasts). (I think we may reject the appalling *possibility* of a play on *Candie—can die*.)

291–5. He escaped flogging for lechery by pretending that he was guilty on another charge, as a defaulting debtor (*i.e. cognovit actionem*, he admitted the correctness of his supposititious creditor's claim). Accordingly an execution was laid upon him, *i.e.* seizure of his person or goods—in this case, presumably, of his person. Thus he escaped the other prosecution. But his fellow-knave, the supposed creditor, took advantage of his position to extort from him in earnest the amount of the supposed debt, as the price of his liberty.

297. *cornet*: not the modern *cornet à pistons*, but a now obsolete wind-instrument consisting of a tube, either straight or curved, with holes all down its length, not unlike a penny-whistle in appearance.

This makes perfect sense and there is not the slightest occasion for Sampson's strange conjecture *coney*, which he supports by a quotation from Pliny about hares having several fundaments!

297. *lamprey*. The ventages of this creature are discussed by Sir T. Brown, *Pseudodoxia*, III. 19: "Whether Lampries have nine eyes, as is received, we durst refer it unto *Polyphemus*, who had but one, to judge it". Whatever the opinion of Polyphemus, the *Encycl. Brit.* explains that "on each side behind the head there is a row of seven branchial openings, through which water is conveyed to and from the gills".

Cf. Marston, *Malcontent*, I. 1. 335: "palace-lampreels that...are full of eyes on both sides".

298–300. *Ireland...no poyson*: because St Patrick, standing on Croagh Patrick, by Westport in Connemara, and ringing his bell, collected all the venomous beasts in Ireland and cast them thence into the sea.

300. *Spaniards fart*: one of several allusions to the Don Diego who made himself offensive in St Paul's (some time before 1598). Cf. *Sir T. Wyat*, p. 45; Heywood, *Fair Maid of the West*, Pt. I. iv. (*Wks.* II. 317), etc.

The point is further that breaking wind was peculiarly offensive to the Irish. Cf. Nash, *Pierce Penniless* (Grosart), p. 55: "The Irishman will draw his dagger and bee ready to kill and slay, if one breake winde in his company".

301. *Saint Anthony fire*: erysipelas. So-called because invocation of that saint was supposed to have saved the lives of many sufferers in the great epidemic of A.D. 1089.

306. *gargarisme*: gargle.

315. Another Elizabethan commonplace derived from Seneca's

> Per scelera semper sceleribus tutum est iter.
> For crime new crimes are still the safest way. (*Agam.* 115.)

It is quoted in *The Spanish Tragedy* and *The Malcontent*; echoed in *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *Catiline*, and *The Duke of Milan*.

317. *gallouses*: *i.e.* felons doomed to the gallows, gallows-birds. "The reference is to placing the condemned man on the shoulders of another man, who then slips aside, leaving the prisoner hanging" (Sampson).

320. Cf. *Jul. Caes.* I. 3. 144–5.

323. *Inopem me copia fecit*: Ovid, *Metam.* III. 466. Narcissus, vainly wooing his own shadow in the water, complains to it: "My gain of thee has been but mine own loss" (*lit.* "Abundance has left me destitute"). Like many of Webster's classical tags it is not conspicuously apposite. Or rather though the phrase *would* be intelligible, if taken to mean "having so fair a wife has left me worse off than with no wife at all", yet the translation in the next line—"Plenty of hornes hath made him poore of hornes"—remains obscure. "Plenty of hornes" clearly suggests "hornes of plenty" (cf. on I. 1. 78 for the association of cornucopias and cuckoldry); but can "poore of hornes" mean "poore in respect of having hornes" (*i.e.* as being a cuckold)? It seems very strained. Probably the phrase as a whole applies only to the stag in the picture; and Camillo's only point of resemblance consists in being also a horned beast.

331 ff. One of the parables Webster is peculiarly fond of inserting, not always with great relevance. Cf. *W.D.* IV. 2. 224 ff.; *D.M.* III. 2. 145 ff.; III. 5. 149 ff.

This one is derived either from Aesop, *Fable* 77 (ed. Halm: Teubner series), "The Frogs and the Sun"; or from Phaedrus I. 6 (which got its author into trouble as a satire on Sejanus). In the latter Aesop is said to have related, on the occasion of the marriage of a thievish neighbour, how the frogs lamented at the marriage of the sun—"What will become of us, if he has children?"

357. *pirats.* Under Gregory XIII, who found it easier to regulate the heavenly bodies in the Calendar than the Papal States, the banditti, having so multiplied as to drive traders and travellers from the roads to sea-routes, followed them on to the water and began to compete as pirates with the Turkish and Moorish privateers.

380. *our sister Dutchesse.* Greg suggests (*Mod. Lang. Quart.* Dec. 1900) that *sister* is due to a combination in Webster's mind of Cardinal Montalto, later Sixtus V, with the Cardinal de' Medici, Isabella's brother. But *sister* need be no more than a courtesy title.

383–5. Only exposure to some real ignominy will sting Brachiano out of his infatuation.

II. 2.

Probably, whole stage; the Dumb-Shows taking place in the "study".

14. *a curtall to shew juggling trickes.* A curtall is a docked horse: here, as Reed first saw, it is a clear allusion to Banks's performing horse (or, probably, horses), like dozens of other references found in literature from 1591 to the middle of the next century.

This animal, Morocco, did calculations, identified people named to it, danced, climbed St Paul's in 1601, and accomplished "suche strange feates for suche a beast to doe, that many people judged that it was impossible to be don except he had a familiar or don by the arte of magicke". Similarly Raleigh in his *History* observed that "if Banks had lived in the olden times, he would have shamed all the inchanters in the world". And Douce (*Illustrat. to Shakesp.*, 1807, 1. p. 212) quotes from an interesting account by a French eyewitness, who saw Banks in Paris in 1601 (to be found in the notes to a translation of Apuleius' *Golden Ass* by Jean de Montlyard, Sieur de Melleray). According to him the magistrates, suspecting sorcery, imprisoned man and horse; but finding all to be done by means of signs and convinced by Banks's offer to teach any other horse as much in a twelvemonth, they set both free again. The Papal authorities however appear to have been less enlightened, if there is truth in the story that after all their tricks master and horse were burnt together in Rome. Cf. Jonson, *Epigram* 133:

> Old Banks the jugler, our Pythagoras,
> Grave tutor to the learned horse: both which,
> Being, beyond sea, burned for one witch,
> Their spirit transmigrated to a cat.

Cf. also *Love's Labour's Lost*, 1. 2. 50, with note, in Furness's *Variorum Sh.*; Dando and Runt, *Maroccus Extaticus* (1595).

16. *reame*: realm.

16. *figure-flingers*: casters of horoscopes.

19–20. *divell...fustian Lattine.* "Fast and loose" was a game played —and said to be still played—by sharpers and gipsies. A belt was coiled on a table in such a way that it seemed easy to pin it down by

the centre; or a handkerchief so knotted as to seem quite fast. The gull was then invited to bet whether the thing were fast or loose; and of course lost either way. A variation consisted in pulling three beads off a string, in spite of the ends being apparently held.

Applied to the devil, the phrase presumably means making men think that Satan, like the knot, is now present, now away.

Cf. Montaigne (III. 8) on the pedant whose parade of jargon "may fitly be compared unto juglers' play of fast and loose". (C.)

20. *fustian*: gibberish. The word means originally "coarse cloth". Cf. "bombast" = (1) cotton-wool of the kind used for padding out clothing; (2) verbal padding.

A Dumbe Shew. Cf. *D.M.* III. 4. We find dumb-shows appearing in early Elizabethan academic tragedies like *Gorboduc*, *Jocasta*, *Gismond of Salerne*, and *The Misfortunes of Arthur*; and it has been plausibly suggested that these are descended from the *intermedii* (interludes of dance and song treating some allegorical or mythical theme), which occur between the acts of Italian drama, especially at Ferrara, towards the close of the fifteenth century (Cunliffe, *Early Eng. Class. Tragedies*, xl.). In *Gorboduc*, etc., these shows are in the nature of charades symbolizing the course of events in the act to follow (cf. the dumb-show before the play in *Hamlet*). It was a natural development that these shows should next be made a more integral part of the play and find a place, often as dreams or magic shows, *inside* the acts instead of between them. They thus gave the ordinary Elizabethan dramatist, who liked as much "business" as possible, a means of cramming yet more action into the time at his disposal, without incurring even the delay of dialogue. And whereas the older dumb-show had indicated what would occur in the future, the new type was useful rather to show what had occurred in the past or was occurring elsewhere in the present. Thus in Peele's *Battle of Alcazar* we have a dumb-show of events leading up to the war; while in Chapman's *Bussy d'Ambois*, IV. 2, Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, II. 3, IV. 3, the device is used, as here, to enable persons on the stage to see what is happening somewhere else. It becomes, in fact, a romantic counterpart of the classical messenger's speech; and we may compare, for instance, with this passage of Webster the messenger's description of the poisoning of Creusa in the *Medea* of Euripides. Webster's method is less poetic; but it has a more directly vivid effect in so far as "things seen are mightier than things heard". Quaint, naïve, almost grotesque as these shows are to read, on the stage they can be made unexpectedly impressive; not so much aweing an audience as holding it, and yet remaining too weird to be in the least ridiculous. At the same time it is difficult in this particular case not to feel that Webster chose fictions far less tragic than the truth, in the actual methods he uses for the murder of the Duchess and, even more, of Camillo. His "polliticke" vaulting-horse is a childish substitute for that sudden

crackle of arquebuses in the midnight darkness of the lane on Monte Cavallo (see Hist. Introd. p. 74).

In *D.M.* III. 4, on the other hand, we have a last stage of the dumb-show, in which it has become a mere extra purple patch of pageantry (cf. *Henry VIII*, IV. 1, Anne's coronation). Thus the Dumb-Show has, on the one hand, affinities with the Greek Chorus and Messenger; while its introducer (here the Conjurer) recalls the Doctor or Expositor of the Morality Play. For its general popularity we may take to witness the prologue of Heywood's *English Traveller*:

> A Strange Play you are like to have, for know
> We use no Drum, nor Trumpet, nor Dumbe show;
> No Combate, Marriage, not so much to-day
> As Song, Dance, Masque to bumbaste out a Play.

(See Chambers, I. 185 ff.; F. A. Forster in *Eng. Studien*, XLIV. 8 ff.)

1–2. *curtaine . . . picture.* Before the days of picture-glass pictures were curtained from the dust. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, I. 3. 135 ff.: "Wherefore have these gifts a curtain before 'em? are they like to take dust like Mistress Mall's picture?" Also *ibid.* I. 5. 252–3.

24–5. *poysoned, By the fum'd picture.* Cf. Pedro Mexia, *The Treasurie of Auncient and Moderne Times* (Eng. transl. 1613), II. xvii: "That a man may be impoysoned by Pomanders of sweete smell, Fumes of Torches, Tapers, Candels; by Letters, Garments, and other such like things". He goes on to mention how a friend of his, surgeon to Louis de Bourbon, Prince de Condé, having carried in his pocket for five or six hours a pomander presented by an Italian Perfumer to his master, was seized with violent convulsions and ill for two months after; while an apothecary's servant who pocketed the same pomander, died in eight days. He also asserts a Lombard to have killed an enemy with a poisoned gilly-flower.

P. Simpson, to whose note on Jonson, *Ev. Man in his Hum.* IV. 8. 16, I owe the reference to Mexia, mentions also an Italian plot (for discovering which Burleigh paid an agent £20) "to take away the Queen's life by poisoned perfumes, for which purpose, Geraldi, a Bergamasco, was employed by the Pope" (1589).

24–31. The commas of the Quarto, here replaced by dashes for clearness, are a good example of the Elizabethan use of that stop in speeches of breathless excitement. Similarly in the stage-directions of the Dumbe Shews.

41. *boone voyage*: *bon voyage.* A common Elizabethan form.

49–50. *wee are now Beneath her roofe.* There is a sorry lameness in putting this bald stage-direction into the mouth of one of the *dramatis personae*. It might perhaps be pleaded that it recalls both Brachiano and the audience with a jerk from the shadow-world back to reality. But the exact situation of the scene would have been better indicated earlier; here it seems too much a mere afterthought.

52. *this*: this service of yours, and the memory of it.

III. 1.

Outer stage. The scene is outside the hall where the Arraignment takes place: it probably occurred neither to Webster nor his audience to define it more narrowly than this. Historically it seems to have been in St Angelo: Greg suggests here Francisco's Palace. Similarly with the time; the news of Isabella's death comes after the trial and she died presumably at Padua. At most a few days have elapsed.

2. *Leiger Embassadours*: resident Ambassadors as contrasted with special envoys. (A.S. *liggen*, to lie.)

11. *in by the weeke*: a phrase usually applied to the bondage of passion. Cf. *Ralph Roister Doister*, I. 2; *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 2. 65, with note, in Furness's *Variorum Sh.* There Halliwell quotes a MS. of 1619: "*Captus est*; he is taken, he is in for a byrd, he is in by the weeke". Capell, and Schmidt (*Shakesp. Lex.*) suggest that the metaphor is from hiring servants; but it seems to me more likely to be derived from the idea of a heavy sentence of imprisonment, such as would be counted in terms, not of days, but of weeks. Hence it might acquire a general sense of being deeply involved, whether in love or any other constraint.

15. *tickler*: castigator. Not in this sense in *N.E.D.*: but it is supported by the analogous use of the verb—"to make one smart".

17. *private*: intimate.

19. *publicke*: unchaste.

21. *ferit* (ferret): hunt them out. Cf. the Earl of Shrewsbury to Sir T. Edmondes, Feb. 12th 1605–6 (Birch): "the Bill... chastising and bridling recusants, and ferreting and punishing the jesuits and priests".

23. *catch conyes*: cheat. The cony being a simple creature; cf. "to gull". Both "ferret" and "catch conies" were cant terms in London slang: see Dekker, *Lanthorn and Candlelight*, ch. iv. and note on IV. 1. 54 below.

25–8. Sampson quotes Sharpham, *Cupid's Whirligig* (1607): "The French proverbe saies, *Fame baissee* est demie joyee, a woman kis'd is halfe injoyed". So Ray's *Proverbs*, more laconically, "Free with her lips is free with her hips".

31. *gull*: deceive. Perhaps from "gull" = a young unfledged bird, esp. a gosling; or perhaps from "to gull" = to cram, stuff up.

43–5. From Montaigne, II. 12: "It would be even as if one should go about to graspe the water: for, how much the more he shal close and presse that which by its owne nature is ever gliding, so much the more he shall loose what he would hold and fasten". (C.)

Cf. too *Arcadia*, III. (*Wks.* I. 474): "perceiving that (as in water) the more she grasped, the lesse she held". (C.) Reed notes a borrowing from this passage of Webster in Dryden, *All for Love*, v. 1:

> this being
> Which, like a snowball, in my coward hand
> The more 'tis grasped, the faster melts away.

47. *fresh shamoyes.* Not "shoes" (Steevens), but the chamois jerkin worn under armour.

Cf. Montaigne I. 43: "How soone doe plaine chamoy-jerkins and canvass doublets creep into fashion and credit among our souldiers, if they live in the field". So "Beaum. & Fl.", *The Scornful Lady*, II. 2:

> Love thy brave man of war and let thy bounty
> Clap him in shamois.

52–7. The exact point of this "lamented doctrine" is none too clear. The gist seems to be—whatever advantage one aims at, some disadvantage always accompanies it, just as beside the healing mistletoe grows the fatal mandrake. There is, in fact, always a fly in the ointment; and thus when we try to rise in the world, the slightest offence given to our great masters, though they may pretend not to treat us very severely, does in fact bring us to utter ruin at their hands.

53. *Sacred to physicke.* Gerard in his *Herball* says mistletoe is useful as an emollient for old swellings, "taketh away foule ill-favoured nailes", and has cured the stitch, when drunk with oil. But these are no great claims to medical sanctity and Webster is more probably depending on Pliny (XVI. 44), who describes how the Druids thought it a perfect panacea. "They call it in their language All-Heale, (for they have an opinion of it, that it cureth all maladies whatsoever)." "So vaine and superstitious," adds Pliny contemptuously, "are many nations in the world." (Holland's transl.)

53. [*on*] *the builder Oke*: cf. Chaucer, *Parl. of Foules*, 176:

> The bilder ook, and eek the hardy asshe.

Which is copied by Spenser, *F. Queen*, I. I. 8:

> The builder oak, sole king of forests all.

I have printed *on* in place of the *or* of the Qq: see Text. Note. Sampson (reading *or*) most unconvincingly suggests that the *Oke* must here mean "the gallows", because mandrakes were supposed to grow under these. But had Webster meant "gallows", why should he have written "oak"? And there is moreover evidence for a belief definitely connecting the mandrake with the *mistletoe-bearing* oak. Chéruel, *Dictionnaire Hist. des Institutions, Mœurs, et Coûtumes de la France* (1899), II. 726, gives the story of an eighteenth-century peasant about a *main de gloire* (*mandragore*, mandrake) existing at the foot of a mistletoe-bearing oak. This man imagined the *main de gloire* to be a sort of mole, which if you fed it returned twice the value of the food; but woe to those who forgot, once they had begun, to feed it daily with the utmost regularity! For they paid for the slightest neglect with death. See J. R. Harris, *Origin of the Cult of Aphrodite*, pp. 22–3, where the passage is quoted and the suggestion made that the mandrake became later associated with gibbets, because such

sacred oaks used once themselves to be decked with the bodies or heads of sacrificed victims. They were, in fact, "gallows-trees".

54. *a Mandrake by it.* The mandrake, so frequently mentioned by Webster, may well seem a fitting symbol of his genius, with its mysterious, macabre earthiness, its crying to heaven like some half-human thing rising from its grave. He is very fond of it: and it deserves some notice here.

The mandrake (*Atropa Mandragora*) is a relation of the humble potato, bearing yellow fruit "of the bigness of a reasonable pippin"; but poisonous and sometimes used as a narcotic (cf. *Othello*, III. 3. 331; *Ant. and Cleop.* I. 5. 4), or as an emetic purgative. For its virtue as an aphrodisiac, or to promote conception, modern authority seems lacking. Yet the belief that it has these powers is of immemorial antiquity. Thus in *Genesis* xxx. Rachel secures the "love-apples" which Reuben had brought his mother Leah (Hebrew, *Dudaim*, supposed to be connected with a root meaning "Love"—cf. David, Dido: in *Septuagint*, μῆλα μανδραγόρων). Through classical antiquity and the Middle Ages the same superstition persisted and furnished a livelihood to numerous impostors, who manufactured much more human-looking mandrakes than Nature had provided, by carving bryony roots and making millet seeds sprout in the appropriate parts to imitate hair. Even as late as the nineteenth century Sibthorp found young Athenians wearing it about their persons. And J. R. Harris in a fascinating article, to which this account is much indebted (*The Origin of the Cult of Aphrodite* in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Oct.–Dec. 1916), has even tried to prove the Goddess of Love herself to be in origin no more than a personification of the mandrake with its supernatural powers[1]. It is extraordinary that all these amatory beliefs should have clustered round what seems to be really an opiate; possibly it was due to the accidentally human and sexual *appearance* of the root. But I should not be surprised to find that the plant was really capable of producing both effects, according to the dose.

The mandrake-root, like that of parsnips and carrots, is occasionally found forked in such a way that it really does show a likeness to the lower part of the human body—now male, now female. It is in fact "a forked radish" resembling a man, just as Justice Shallow resembled "a forked radish". From this weird likeness doubtless arose the strange idea that the plant grew under gibbets from the droppings of the dead; the male mandrake from men and the female from women. And hence also the even stranger idea that, human-like, they "give a shriek upon eradication"; "arising perhaps," Sir Thomas Browne continues, "from a small and stridulous noise, which, being firmly rooted, it maketh upon divulsion of parts". And since it was

[1] Ironically enough, "Venus" and "venom" are probably in origin the same word (*venesnum* being used in the sense of "love-philtre").

death to whoever pulled up this magic plant, a dog was always employed for this purpose, and expired instantly; while in order to prevent the madness caused by hearing the shriek, the gatherer sealed up his own ears. (Cf. the Lat. name, *mala canina*; and Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* VII. 6. 3: also the difficulty of digging up the herb Moly, the antidote to Circe's spells, in Homer, *Od.* x. 305–6. Note too that the mandrake itself was also called Κιρκαία.) To conclude with the most fantastic story of all: "Avicenna the Arabian physician asserts that a Jew at Metz had a mandragore with a human head and the legs and body of a cock, which lived five weeks, and was fed on lavender and earthworms and, when dead, was preserved in spirits". (Walter de la Mare, *Come Hither*, p. 610.)

See also Pliny XXV. 13; Gerard, *Herball*, II. 65; Parkinson, *Theatr. Botan.* p. 343; Matthioli, *in lib. quartum Dioscoridis*, pp. 759 ff.; Donne, *Progress of the Soul*, XV. (where both effects are defined—"His apples kindle, his leaves, force of conception kill"); and lastly Sir T. Browne, *Pseudodoxia*, II. 6.

68. *Tilter*: probably with a *double entendre*, as certainly in 16 above.

69. *at last Tilting*: it is a good example of the mania for finding topical allusions, that Fleay used this to date the play in 1607–8, on the ground that a certain M. Goterant tilted on March 24th 1607 (see p. 68). It is enough that the French were famous for their horsemanship; cf. *D.M.* I. 1. 142 ff.

69–70. *like a peuter candlesticke*. Cf. *Hen. V*, IV. 2. 45–6:

> The horsemen sit like fixed candlesticks,
> With torch-staves in their hand. (H.D.S.)

There is an illustration, in the note on this passage in Malone's *Shakespeare* (1821 ed.), of such a candlestick, then in the possessio of Douce; it represents a man in armour, with arms outstretched to right and left and a hole in each hand for a candle.

The reader may be reminded of those very different living candlesticks from Webster's Frenchman who appear in Scott's *Legend of Montrose*.

73–4. *sleepes a horsebacke like a poulter*. Steevens observed that in his day poulterers went to market no earlier than other men; but later recanted, "having lately met with several country-poulterers asleep over the baskets which they carried on horseback before them, a position sufficiently commodious to solicit repose, and safe enough to allow it".

76–8. Cf. Middleton, *Roaring Girl*, IV. 2. 20 ff.: "Because Goshawk goes in a shag-ruff band, with a face sticking up in't which shows like an agate set in a cramp-ring, he thinks I'm in love with him". And Jonson, *Alchemist*, IV. 1 (of a similar Spanish pomposity):

> He looks in that deep ruff like a head in a platter,
> Serv'd in by a short cloke upon two trestles.

In Spain indeed ruffs were of unusual vastness, so that according to Howell they had been known to cost 20*s*. to starch, "and some, tho' perhaps he had never a shirt to his back, yet he would have a toting (bulging) huge swelling ruff about his neck".

77. *cipres*: cobweb lawn or crape.

79. *broyled in a candle*: for this fashion of cooking, cf. Fletcher, *Women Pleased*, I. 2, where, in an engaging stage-direction, the miser Penurio's egg is discovered "roasting by a Candle".

III. 2.

Whole stage. The curtain of the inner stage was simply drawn back at Flamineo's last words, revealing the Court ready seated within.

7–8. *dutch-women...Church...stooles*. We may recall the famous Jenny Geddes who is said to have started a riot by flinging her stool at the head of David Lindsay, Bishop of Edinburgh, when he tried to read Laud's service-book in St Giles' on July 23rd 1637. What purports to be the original stool (its genuineness is doubtful) is in the Edinburgh Antiquarian Museum; and is simply like a modern camp-stool. See too Marvell's "Character of Holland".

11–2. "My lord, turn your eyes upon this plague, this worst of women."

23. *stand on't much*: insist on speaking Latin.

27. *give aime*: as in rifle-shooting, so in archery there was a marker by the butts who signalled where each shot went. Cf. Ford, *The Spanish Gipsy*, II. 1. 92 ff.: "I myself gave aim, thus: wide, four bows; short, three and a half".

30. *connive your Judgements*: this jargon, did it possess any meaning, would have exactly the wrong one—"shut your eyes towards". Cf. Massinger, *The Picture*, III. 2:

> Pray you, connive
> On my weak tenderness.

31. *diversivolent*: stirring up discord.

35. *projections*: projects.

37. *must have exulceration*: must involve, inflame exasperation.

41. *stones...Haukes*. Cf. G. Markham, *Cheape and Good Husbandry* (2nd ed., 1616), p. 160, where seven to fifteen fine white pebbles from a river are prescribed (Sampson).

42. *to Lattin*: compared with. Cf. Johnson on *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. 4. 139: "*Herbert* called for the prayers of the *Liturgy* a little before his death, saying, 'None to them, none to them'".

49. *fustian*: coarse cloth. Cf. on II. 2. 20.

50. *buckeram*: a kind of stiff, coarse linen, traditionally used for attorney's bags. Cf. *D.L.* IV. 2. 38.

62. *effected*: if the text is right (which I doubt—see Text. Note), this must mean "put into action"; cf. *Troil. and Cress.* V. 10. 6: "Frown

on, you heavens, effect your rage with speed". We are hardly justified in taking "effected" = "infected" by the passage of Fabyan (1494—VII. 371) quoted in *N.E.D.*: "The Albygensis...had ben effected with dyvers poyntes of herysy". For it too may be corrupt, apart from being a century earlier.

67–8. *apples...Sodom.* This is an ancient idea. Cf. *Deut.* xxxii. 32: "Their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter". Details about the fruit seem to appear first in Josephus, *Jewish War*, IV. 8. 4. In the Middle Ages the tradition recurs in Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Historiae*, I. 67; where we have a more startling version to the effect that the apples are not only full of ashes when opened, but also proceed to smoke as if on fire. This is copied by Mandeville (XIII)—without the smoke—and by Bartholomeus Anglicus (*De Proprietatibus Rerum*, XIII. 13)—with it. No satisfactory identification of the actual plant appears to have been made; botanists are divided between *Calotropis procera*; various kinds of *solanum*; the colocynth; and the oak-galls produced by the insect *Cynips insana*. We may content ourselves with recalling Milton's description, *P.L.* X. 564:

> they, fondly thinking to allay
> Their appetite with gust, instead of Fruit
> Chew'd bitter Ashes, which th' offended taste
> With spattering noise rejected: oft they assay'd,
> Hunger and thirst constraining; drugg'd as oft,
> With hatefullest disrelish writh'd their jaws,
> With soot and cinders fill'd.

74. *scarlet*: "the color of the legal faculty, or perhaps here of the cardinal's vestments" (Sampson). Undoubtedly, I think, the latter.

75–80. *how...This whore..was holy.* The stress is on *how*—what an ironic sort of sanctity she showed.

81. *what's that?* Vittoria perhaps means "what's that you say?"; the Cardinal then intentionally answering as if he misunderstood her question to mean "what is a whore?" But I have always instinctively supposed Vittoria herself to mean "what is a whore?", as an audacious climax of assumed innocence. Cf. II. 1. 164 where Isabella says she does not know what "jealousy" means; and 276 below.

83. *their perfect character*: this is indeed a perfect seventeenth-century "Character" in verse, all the more interesting in connection with Webster's supposed contributions to the prose Characters known as "Overbury's".

84. *Sweete meates...eater.* Cf. Dekker, *Whore of Babylon* (1607), sig. I 2:

> Good words,
> Sweet meates that rotte the eater. (Dyce.)

90. *tributes ith low countries.* Cf. Fynes Moryson, *Itin.* III. 4. 6. Sampson quotes Howell, *Letters* (1890), I. 26 (from Amsterdam):

"monstrous accises which are impos'd upon all sorts of commodities both for belly and back; for the retailer pays the States almost the one moiety as much as he paid for the commodity at first".

92. *mans perdition*: *i.e.* taxes on prostitution.

100–1. *dead bodies...surgeons*: the 1540 charter of the Barber-Surgeons allowed them four executed felons a year; but doubtless others were commonly begged for, by them or by private practitioners.

103. *guilty conterfetted coine*: perhaps with a play on "gilt", which is the actual reading of the later Qq.

112–3. Cf. *Othello*, II. 3. 299: "It hath pleased the devil drunkenness to give place to the devil wrath". Doubtless the Biblical casting out of devils by Beelzebub is the ultimate source.

122. *Wound up*: in his winding-sheet.

132. *Christian Court*. Reed suggests an allusion to the technical term for Ecclesiastical Courts in England which dealt with adultery—"Courts Christian". It is quite possible, but the *primary* sense here is clearly more general—Christian as opposed to Tartar.

134. *scandals*: abuses, reviles.

139. *of force*: perforce.

139. *Perseus*. Mitford's emendation *Portia* or *Portia's* was generally adopted until P. Simpson decisively pointed out (*Mod. Lang. Rev.* II. 162–3) that *Perseus* was borrowed from Jonson's *Masque of Queens* (acted and printed in 1609). In that there appear twelve masquers on a pyramid of light in the House of Fame, "From whom, a person by this time descended, in the furniture of *Perseus* and expressing *heroique and masculine Vertue*, began to speak". And a marginal note adds: "The Antients expressed a brave and masculine *Vertue* in three figures (of *Hercules*, *Perseus*, and *Bellerophon*)".

There is another borrowing from this masque in Webster's *Mon. Col.* 23.

140. *Must personate masculine vertue—To the point!* I have altered the Q punctuation (see Text. Note). *Must personate masculine vertue to the point* would be possible, meaning "in every detail". *To point* is indeed commoner (French, *à point*); but cf. *Meas. for Meas.* III. 1. 256. Still the parallel passages elsewhere in Webster seem to me decisive in favour of the alteration.

142–3. Cf. Montaigne III. 10: "How many gallant men have rather made choice to lose their life than to be indebted for the same". The resemblance, of course, may be only coincidence: H.D.S. quotes also *Arcadia*, III. (*Wks.* I. 465): "One might see in Pamela a willingnesse to die, rather then to have life at others discretion".

147. *strickt-combined*: close-leagued.

151. *painted devils*. Cf. *Macbeth*, II. 2. 55–6:

> 'Tis the eye of childhood
> That fears a painted devil.

154–5. *spit...face.* Cf. Heywood, *A Challenge for Beauty*, IV. (*Wks.* v. 57):

> all my attempts
> Like curses shall against the winde flie back
> In mine owne face and soile it.

162–5. *debt...cosen her.* Cf. Hist. Introd. pp. 72, 87.

169. *Cowardly dogs barke loudest.* Cf. *Hen. V*, II. 4. 69–71:

> coward dogs
> Most spend their mouths when what they seem to threaten
> Runs far before them.

173. *thy coate*: note the drop into the scornful second person singular.

173–7. Cf. Bacon, *Apophthegms* (1624), 16 (*Wks.* ed. Spedding, VII. 127): "Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, a great champion of the Papists, was wont to say of the Protestants, who ground upon the Scripture, *That they were like posts, that bring truth in their letters, and lies in their mouths*". (C.)

What *letters* of truth do priests here carry? "Letters" in the sense of "learning" has been suggested; but surely it is the truth of the Evangel which they are supposed to announce to the world.

178–83. A similar incident is quoted by G. A. Parry (*N.Q.* II. VII. 326) from the *Percy Anecdotes* (Chandos reprint, p. 197), where it is related that Robert of Normandy, father of the Conqueror, was invited to a feast by the Emperor of Constantinople, at which no chairs were provided for him and his suite. Consequently they had to sit on their rich cloaks, which at their departure they left lying on the ground; and when the Emperor sent the abandoned garments after them, the Duke replied: "Go and tell your master that it is not the custom of the Normans to carry about with them the seats which they use at entertainments".

A like episode occurs in Lope de Vega's *El honrado hermano* (published 1623, perhaps written before 1604), in which Horacio after throwing down his mantle on the ground to sit on before King Mancio and the Albanian senate and making a defiant speech, goes out leaving his cloak with the words "I am not accustomed to carry away my stool".

180. *challenge*: lay claim to.

184. *Valence*: drapery hanging round a bed-canopy. Probably from the town of that name, near Lyons, where silk is still made (Skeat).

184. *foote-cloth*: housing of a horse or mule, which hung down its sides and protected the rider's feet from the mud. A sign of dignity.

186. *Nemo me Impune lacessit.* This motto first appeared on the Scotch "Thistle-mark" coined by James VI in 1578. Note the stress laid on "*Impune*" by its capital.

188. *prey*: perhaps with a pun on "pray".

193–4. Cf. Marston, *Sophonisba*, II. 3. 35–6:

> Through the rotten'st dung best plants do sprout and live;
> By blood vines grow.

Bullen's explanation of the practice by a reference to Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride* is unconvincing. There is however in the *Gesta Romanorum* (Bohn, 1877), Tale CLIX, a statement that Noah, finding the wild vine bitter, manured it with the blood of a lamb, a lion, an ape and a pig (animals symbolizing, in the original rabbinical tradition, the various stages of drunkenness).

198–9. Cf. *D.M.* IV. 1. 23–4.

202. *summer-house*: "country-house" (H.D.S.). But the allusion is, I think, rather to those slighter garden-houses, erected in the gardens of the London suburbs, which have an evil name throughout Elizabethan drama. See Nares, *Glossary*, *s.v.* "garden-house".

208. Ovid, *Amores*, I. 8. 43:

> She's chaste whom no man has solicited.

223. *Crusado's*: a Portuguese gold or silver coin, worth 400 reis (*i.e.* approx. 4 francs).

224–5. *the devill...good shape*: cf. 2 *Corinthians* xi. 14: "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light". (Krusius.)

237–8. *as* [*long*] *As to my thoughts*: so long as to reach even to my thoughts. Copied from Jonson, *Sejanus*, II. 4:

> *Agrippina.* Yea had Sejanus both his ears as long
> As to my inmost closet, I would hate
> To whisper any thought or change an act
> To be made Juno's rival.

242. *choake-peare*: a harsh kind of pear, grown for perry, or found wild, and sometimes, says Gerard, "of such choking taste, that they are not to be eaten of hogs and wild beasts, much lesse of men".

243. *borne in Venice*: for this possible confusion with Bianca Capello, see Hist. Introd. p. 89.

244. The Vitelli were a great Roman family who had nothing to do with either Vittoria or Bianca. Lodovico Orsini was indeed banished for the murder of Vincenzo Vitelli, whence Webster may have remembered the name (see Hist. Introd. p. 80).

249. *Julio*: coin of Pope Julius II (1503–13), worth about 6*d.*

250. *light*: in double sense.

251. *curtaine*: see on II. 2, *Dumbe Shew*, 1–2.

257. *Ryalto*: the Exchange of Venice, the famous bridge of which was at this time just coming of age (it had been completed in 1591). *Ryalto talke* doubtless means "talk of the town" in a general sense, without particular limitation to Venice, though the occurrence of *Venice* a few lines above probably suggested it to Webster.

258. *ballated.* Cf. *D.L.* V. 4. 192.

267. *to'th.* This curious form which will be found repeatedly in some of the plays is probably not what it seems, a misprint for *to th'*. It recurs far too persistently; and we sometimes find the fuller form *to'th'*. It is an instance of that other Elizabethan use of the apostrophe

to mark the *shortening*, in pronunciation, of the syllable preceding it—in this case, *to*. Similarly we find *by'th*, *a'th*. *Th* was itself so familiar a contraction that the second apostrophe, which in strictness it needs, was generally dropped. But of course the printers' practice is very inconsistent.

283. *patent*: a metaphor, probably, of a patent granting a certain rank or title, rather than of a commercial one granting a monopoly, as Sampson suggests. For the idea, cf. H. Belloc, "Dives":

> The guarantee
> From Lambeth that the rich shall never burn.

285. *a rape!* Cf. Chapman and Shirley, *Chabot* (? 1612–3 in its original form: certainly after 1611), v. 2. 122: "a most prodigious and fearful rape, a rape even upon Justice itself"; and Tourneur, *Atheist's Tragedy* (publ. 1611), I. 4:

> ——. A rape, a rape, a rape!
> ——. How now!
> ——. What's that?
> ——. Why what is't but a rape to force a wench
> To marry?

292. *horse-lech to speak Treason*: *horse-lech* probably implies "some plotter insatiable of blood" rather than, as Sampson suggests, some person "insatiably loquacious". Cf. Sylvester's *Du Bartas*, II. 4. 4. 192–3, where Jehu vigorously calls to Jezebel at her window:

> Thou life of Strife, thou Horse-leach sent from Hell,
> Thou Drouth, Thou Dearth, Thou Plague of *Israel.*

Similarly in v. 6. 166 below.

308. *attone*: reconcile (at-one).

311. *lost too much already*: *i.e.* in the death of his sister by blood, the Duchess.

317. *palsy*: *i.e.* it wags too readily.

325. *yonder*: like the Greek euphemism ἐκεῖ (there), for "the other world".

343. *fould*: wrapping. Cf. Ford, *Broken Heart*, III. 5:

> That remedy
> Must be a winding-sheet, a fold of lead,
> And some untrod-on corner in the earth.

344. *would not let mee kisse her*: because her lips were still poisonous from the picture; or at all events poison was suspected.

III. 3.

Outer stage. As at the beginning of the last scene, the curtain of the inner stage is merely drawn, with no break in the action.

6–7. *pedlars in Poland*: apparently Poland was full in the seventeenth century of Scotch and Irish pedlars. So that the Lithuanian word for pedlar is *szatas*—"Scot". (Sampson.)

9. *piles*: with a double sense.
21. *diversivolent*: setting others at variance. Repeated by Flamineo, consciously or unconsciously, from the lawyer in the previous scene (III. 2. 31).
22. *gudgions*: (1) a small fish easy to catch; (2) a simpleton.
25. *under the line*: at the equator.
27. *weights...presse men to death*: the *peine forte et dure* inflicted by English law up to 1772 on those who refused to plead guilty or not guilty, when charged with felonies other than treason. The victim was stretched naked on his back and "iron laid upon him as much as he could bear and more". If the victim died in his obstinacy, he at all events saved his goods from confiscation, as not having been convicted. Under this form of justice in 1658 Major Strangways was pressed to death in about ten minutes. See on *C.C.* IV. 1. 118 for the like fate of Flood the informer.
30. *pitch*: height.
36. *commeddled*: mixed up.
37. *first bloudshed...about religion*: Cain's quarrel with Abel about sacrifice.
44–5. *mushromes...dunghill.* Cf. *D.L.* IV. 2. 132; Marlowe, *Edw. II*, 1. 4. 283 (Mortimer, of Cornwall), "a night-growne mushrump".
46. *them practize*: *i.e.* them that practise. But see Text. Note.
47. *Wolnor.* Reed records that Richard Wolner or Wolmer was a singing-man of Windsor, who flourished at the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign. This "cannon of gluttony" gained fame by his ostrich-stomach. Dr Moffet in his *Health's Improvement* (1655) thus describes his tragic end: "Diogenes died with eating raw fish: and Wolner...digesting iron, glass, and oyster-shells, by eating a raw eel was overmastered".
53. *wind*: get scent of.
55. *purchast*: simply "obtained", not "bought". See on *D.M.* II. 5. 50.
63. *stigmaticke*: deformed, hideous (lit. "branded").
66. *ingeniously*: ingenuously. The two forms are used indiscriminately.
67. *dog-daies*: evil days, days of calamity; so, in mod. slang, "a hot time". Cf. *D.M.* I. 1. 40; and see Browne, *Pseudodoxia*, IV. 13, where the superstition is discussed.
71. *Huddle upon huddle*: "tumbling in heaps one over the other". Cf. Rowley, *Match at Midnight*, IV.: "Randall's fortunes comes tumbling in like lawyers' fees, huddle upon huddle". So an eighteenth-century writer describes Stonehenge as a "huddle of large stones". (H.D.S.)
77. *taffeta*: "a plain-wove glossy silk". (*N.E.D.*)
78. *melancholike hare.* Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* 1. 2. 83–8, where the hare is adduced as a type of melancholy, together with an old lion, a tom-cat, or a lugged bear. H.D.S. refers to Turberville's *Book of Hunting*: "The Hare first taught us the use of the hearbe called wyld Succory, which is very excellent for those who are disposed to be melancholicke:

she herself is one of the most melancholicke beasts that is: and to heale her own infirmities, she goeth commonly to sit under that hearbe". Similarly Fynes Moryson warns us that eating its flesh is said to induce melancholy; and there was a proverbial expression of the impossible—"as soon catch a Hare with a Tabor" (that being a merry instrument; Lyly, *Euphues* (Arber), p. 44). Was this notion based on that miserably hunted existence, which made "a hare's life" proverbial in Greek; or on the fact (at least, according to Pliny) that the hare never grows fat? At all events it was left for Charles Kingsley to sing first of the "merry brown hares".

80. *see how yon couple greve*: *i.e.* "Francisco and Monticelso", says Dyce. But the words *Wee are observed* indicate that the *couple* have actually come in sight and are on the point of entering; accordingly it is far simpler to suppose that Antonelli and Gasparo are meant. In the 1612 Quarto Antonelli's entrance is marked at l. 91; but such stage-directions are frequently misplaced and Gasparo's entrance is omitted altogether, though later he has a speech to deliver. *Greve* is of course ironic.

85. *sawcer*: a technical term in surgery. Thus Halliwell on *Love's Lab. Lost*, IV. 3. 102 (in Furness's *Variorum* ed.) quotes from a MS. of the Barbers' Company, dated 1606, which forbids the exhibition by phlebotomists of "their porrengers, saucers, or measures with bloud".

90. *strappado'd*: the strappado was a form of torture in which the victim had his hands tied crossed behind his back and was then hauled up by them on a pulley. In the milder form, or Half Strappado, he was then lowered again; in the Full Strappado he was let fall and pulled up short with a jerk which dislocated shoulders and elbows.

90. *fellie*: felloe—the rim of a wheel; or one of the circular pieces of which it is made.

110. *To water a mandrake*. The mandrake was supposed to thrive especially under gallows, on the droppings which fell from the bodies left to rot there.

114. *breake*: breake faith, fail one; with a play on the sense "go bankrupt" (cf. "debt" in the previous line). H.D.S. quotes T. May, *The Heir*, II.:

> ——. Did not Count Virro promise to be here
> To-day at dinner?
> ——. Yes, madam, that he did; and I dare swear
> He will not break.
> ——. He needs not, he is rich enough...
> ——. Break promise, madam, I mean.

125. *H'had*: the apostrophe means of course that the elided syllable is to be pronounced lightly and quickly, *not* omitted altogether.

IV. I.

Whole stage (the table on which Francisco writes probably stood in the "study").

2. *loose as a brid[e]'s haire*. A regular sixteenth- and seventeenth-century custom for virgin brides. Anne Boleyn, for instance, and the Princess Elizabeth (James's daughter) were thus married with hair loose and dishevelled; and the Countess of Essex adopted the same guise in her wedding to Robert Carr, by way of stressing the nullity of her previous union with Essex. See on *K. John*, III. I. 143 ("in likeness of a new untrimmed bride"), in Furness's *Variorum* ed., with Staunton's note. Was the custom, like the parting of the Roman bride's hair with her husband's spear, a relic of marriage by capture?

21. *audit*: day of reckoning.

35. *blacke booke*. The term is originally applied to any official register (without moral connotation), such as the Black Book of the Exchequer. The sinister sense first seems to appear when the name is given to the collection of reports on the abuses of the monasteries under Henry VIII. Cf. Marston, *Dutch Courtezan*, IV. 5. 113: "He's a strong thief.... He has been long in the black book". It can also signify "book of the Black Art", of necromancy; and there is a play on both senses here (cf. 37). A close parallel exists in W. Fennor's *Compter's Commonwealth* (1617), where, describing his own arrest, he applies the name with a similar quibble to the Prison Register. "A fellow... called mee to a booke (no Bible or Divinity, but rather of Negromancy, for all the Prisoners called it a *Blacke-booke*) comming to it, hee demanded my name, I tolde him, and then hee set it down as horses are in Smithfield at the Toll-booth."

54. *By taking up commodities*: one of the commonest tricks of the Elizabethan usurer. Cf. T. Wilson, *Discourse upon Usury*; and Dekker, *Lanthorn and Candlelight*, IV. where this "undoing of yong Gentlemen" is described in detail. The essential thing was the lending not of money, but of goods, which the swindler could rate far above their value, and perhaps buy back through an agent so as to make a further profit. (Cf. the "truck" system of paying wages in kind.) "One gentleman of great hopes took up £100 in hobby-horses and sold them for £30; and £16 in joints of mutton and quarters of lamb, ready roasted, and sold them for £3." Other "commodities" mentioned are hawk-bells, morrice-bells, brown paper (very frequent), lute-strings, pack-thread, ginger-bread, dung-hill rags. See also *Meas. for Meas.* IV. 3. 5 in Arden ed. with Hart's note; and Gifford's *Massinger*, II. p. 51. There is also a most entertaining dramatization of the whole process in Middleton's *Michaelmas Term*, II. 3.

54. *pollitick bankroupts*: another plague of the period, dealt with, as H.D.S. points out, in the first of Dekker's *Seven Deadly Sins*. The

swindler, having borrowed largely, declared himself bankrupt and barricaded himself in his rooms with provisions for a month; then, one dark night, flitted to the country, there to remain until his weary creditors struck the best bargain they could. He then returned in triumph to spend his ill-gotten gains in London.

Cf. *Hudibras*, III. 3. 248:

> As citizens, by breaking, thrive.

56. *put off*: sell off.

61. Presumably the usurers pay the scriveners a commission in return for the scriveners' recommendation of them to clients anxious to borrow. Sampson explains "Scriveners who drew up the papers in terms unduly favorable to the usurers"; but I do not see how "good reportage" (*i.e.* good report) can have anything to do with drawing up the terms of loans.

62. *antedate their writtes*: possibly writs of execution against unfortunate defendants who if allowed longer grace might have cleared themselves. But there may, I think, be a reference to the device of escaping a prosecution on one charge by getting some fellow-rogue to bring another. If this could be ante-dated, it would take precedence of the genuine one and block it; while the collusive accuser would of course let things stagnate and take no further steps. This appears to have been the intended stratagem of Dr Julio—see II. 1. 291 ff.

75. *tribute of wolves*: Edgar, Alfred's great-grandson, extirpated the Welsh wolves in three years by changing the money-tribute imposed by Athelstan to three hundred wolves' heads a year. Cf. Drayton, *Polyolbion*, Song 9.

83. *Justice*: Justice's.

85. *Irish rebels...heads*. Cf. Mountjoy to Cecil, April 9th 1600: "I have heard you complain that you could not hear of one head brought in for all the Queen's money; but I assure you now the kennels of the streets are full of them". And see *Cal. of State Papers* (*Ireland*), *passim*.

95. *leash*: sporting term for "a set of three" (dogs, etc.).

96. *lawndresse*: Elizabethan laundresses being of proverbially easy virtue.

119. Here we have a momentary echo of the style and metrical cadence of the cruder Revenge Tragedy of the earlier Elizabethan stage.

135–6. This proverbial expression recurs in 3 *Hen. VI*, IV. 7. 25–6 (Vopel). Cf. too Ford, *Lover's Melancholy*, IV. 2:

> So politicians...do wriggle in
> Their heads first, like a fox, to rooms of state;
> Then the whole body follows.

139. *lure*. The lure was a falconer's apparatus for training and recalling his bird. It was made of a bunch of feathers on a framework, arranged to resemble the hawk's particular quarry; and the bird was

fed during training on meat placed in its interstices. Thus Turberville mentions lures made like a crane, or even of a hare's skin stuffed with straw. To recall the hawk from the air the lure was swung or thrown up by a strap attached to it.

IV. 2.

Outer stage, changing to whole stage at 72.

4. *The Pope lies on his death-bed*: Gregory XIII died on April 10th 1585.

21. *coffind in a bak't meate*: quoted by Symonds as an example of Webster's macabre mind (cf. on *D.L.* III. 2. 162). As a matter of fact "coffin", both noun and verb, is common in Elizabethan English without any such associations. A "coffin" is a "mould of paste" or a "pie-dish": cf. *Tam. Shrew*, IV. 3. 82 where Petruchio, who is certainly in no church-yard mood, calls Katherine's new cap

> A custard-coffin, a bauble, a silken pie.

The verb "to coffin" means simply to "enclose in pie-crust". And the whole expression may have been proverbial. Cf. Chapman, *May Day* (*c.* 1609: publ. 1611—note date), V. 1. 142: "She must have better skill in baked meats than I, that can discern a woodcock through the crust".

25. *conveyance*: fraud, trickery.

35. *æquivocation*: using words in double senses—here, presumably, the word "hang".

36. *willow*: the traditional badge of unsuccessful lovers. Cf. *Much Ado*, II. 1. 196, 227; *Othello*, IV. 3 (Desdemona's Willow-song).

The origin of the custom is uncertain—whether from *Psalm* cxxxvii. 2 ("By the rivers of Babylon"); or because the willow flowers without fruit, so that a man who drank a decoction of the seed was supposed to beget only barren daughters; or because the willow was in appearance like the *Agnus Castus*, which the ancients supposed to promote chastity.

39. *And all the lines of age this line convinces*: "*i.e.* the line that follows surpasses all the writers of antiquity" (Sampson). But this is clearly nonsense. The meaning is simply—"All the *wrinkles* of age cannot stand against this truth...".

44. *irregular*: a stronger word then, and equivalent to "wild". Cf. 1 *Hen. IV*, I. 1. 40, "the irregular and wild Glendower".

49. *this changeable stuffe*: this fickle woman.

50. *Ore head and eares in water*: (1) with reference to the gloss on watered silk (a quibble on *changeable stuffe* and *wearing*); (2) (?) "in deep water", "in a difficult position".

51. [*In*]: Brachiano points to Vittoria's door. But see Text. Note.

53. *stand*: withstand.

54. *run*: a miserable quibble on the ordinary sense and the "running' of a sore.

57–8. *Russia...shinnes.* Dyce quotes G. Fletcher, *Russe Commonwealth* (1591), p. 51, according to which defaulting debtors in Russia were beaten "with great cudgels on the shinnes and calves of their legges" every morning from eight till eleven. But, as H.D.S. suggests, Webster very possibly derived the idea from Dekker, *Seven Deadly Sins* (Grosart, p. 28): "The *Russians* have an excellent custome; they beate them on the shinnes, that have money, and will not pay their debts."

59. *methodically*: *i.e.* I have a thoroughly scientific knowledge of you and your kind.

63. A fourteener of the type common in earlier English poetry, giving here a tone of impudent, sing-song bravado.

63. *Spanish fig...Italian sallet* (salad): notorious means of administering poison. So in a letter to the Rev. Joseph Mead (Nov. 10th 1626) we read of Count Gondomar: "about some thirty or forty miles this side of Madrid, he died in the way, as some say, not without suspicion of a Spanish fig".

64. *plie your convoy*: do your business and take me to her.

66. *Polyphemus to Ulisses*: *Odyssey*, IX. 369–70. That he should be eaten last was the Cyclops' boon to Ulysses in return for the wine of Ismarus which the Greek had brought. Curiously enough the same image appears to have been used by James I in rejecting the Spanish overtures to Scotland at the time of the Armada. (See Disraeli, *Curiosities of Lit.* 1881 ed. I. 156.)

67. *turves...Larkes.* Cf. *D.M.* IV. 2. 127 ff.

72. Greg and Sampson have marked here a fresh scene; but this causes a misleading and inappropriate break in the tension. What really happened, no doubt, was that Flamineo merely drew the traverse, revealing Vittoria in her room. Cf. the Quarto stage-direction.

74. *characters*: it has not been realized that the word here quite clearly means, not simply "writing", but "cipher". *N.E.D.* quotes no certain instance before 1659–60—Pepys' *Diary* for Jan. 18th of that year: "I interpreted my lord's letter by his character"; though it gives doubtfully in brackets *Meas. for Meas.* I. 1. 27–9:

> There is a kind of character in thy life
> That to th' observer doth thy history
> Fully unfold.

The word is however found in the first half of the seventeenth century in the not dissimilar sense of "shorthand".

74. *Hieroglyphicks.* Cf. Florio, *Dict.* (1598) "*Geroglifico*, a gieroglife, *mysticall or enigmaticall* letters or cyfers used among the Egyptians".

75. *receiver*: *i.e.* your pimp who receives for you letters from your lovers.

76. *Gods pretious*: *sc.* "blood!" or "body!"

83. *reclaimed*: (hawking term) "tamed". Vittoria is like Camiola in Massinger's *Maid of Honour*, II. 2, "a proud haggard And not to be reclaimed". And Brachiano, like Othello, will cast her off (*Othello*, III. 3. 260–3):

> if I do prove her haggard,
> Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
> I'd whistle her off and let her down the wind
> To prey at fortune.

(A "haggard" was a hawk which had had one full moult in the wild state before capture; thence any hawk particularly difficult to "reclaim".)

83. *bels*: bells of shrill tone were fastened permanently to the hawk's legs to make her easier to find when the quarry was brought down in a covert, and also with the idea that the quarry was additionally terrified by the noise of them.

Cf. *N.Ho!* IV. 2 (p. 237).

84. *Ware hawke. Hawke* in slang meant a swindler—so here, "beware of a trap"; Vittoria puts the same warning more plainly in the next line.

88–92. A splendid example of Webster's magic of rhythm and phrase.

It is a far cry to China of the fourth century B.C.; but cf. the charming observation of the philosopher Kwang on an invitation he received to go to Court: "Have you seen a victim-ox for sacrifice? It is fed and robed to enter the temple. Yet when the time comes it would prefer to be a little pig; but it cannot get to be so".

Webster in his turn is imitated by Dryden in *All for Love*, I. 1. (Mermaid ed. II. p. 26):

> O she has decked his ruin with her love,
> Led him in golden bands to gaudy slaughter,
> And made perdition pleasing.

89. *devill in christall*: a phrase that carries the memory back to the title of the play—and some memories, perhaps, though Webster can hardly have intended this, to Vittoria's own words in III. 2. 212.

The reference is, of course, both to her beauty and the prevalent idea that spirits could be enclosed or revealed in crystals or beryls. Cf. Scott, *Discovery of Witchcraft*, XV. 12 (Sampson); Brand, *Pop. Antiq.* p. 768; D. G. Rossetti's "Rose Mary".

92–3. *Woman...wolfe*. A recasting of Plautus' famous "Homo homini lupus"—"Man is wolf to man". Had Webster also heard Aristotle's phrase about the solitary man being "either a god or a beast"—"ἢ θηρίον ἢ θεός"?

94. *Adamants*: magnets.

97–8. *Irish funeralls...wild Irish*. Cf. Stanyhurst, *Descript. of Irel.* in Holinshed, ch. 8 (the source of I. 2. 29; see note there): "They follow the dead corpse to the grave with howling and barbarous

outcries, pitiful in appearance: whereof grew, as I suppose, the proverbe; To weepe Irish".

106–7. A reminiscence, as Dyce points out, of *Rich. III*, I. 3. 135–7:

> *Glo.* Poor Clarence did forsake his father, Warwick,
> Ay, and forswore himself,—which Jesu pardon!—
> *Q. Mar.* Which God revenge!

112. *sicke*: "are sick" (a verb). Cf. 2 *Hen. IV*, IV. 4. 128: "Edward sick'd and died".

113. *Ill-senting foxes*: the use of the fox in paralysis seems to have been a regular treatment. Cf. H. King, *Poems*, "Madam Gabrina":

> If a Fox cures the Paralyticall,
> Had'st thou ten Palsies, she'd out-stink them all.

And Jonson, writing to the Earl of Newcastle, says: "I being strucken with the Palsey in the Yeare 1628. had by S^r^ Thomas Badger some few monthes synce, a Foxe sent mee for a present: w^ch^ Creature, by handling, I endeavored to make tame, aswell for the abateing of my disease, as the delight I tooke in speculation of his Nature". (*Wks.* ed. Herford and Simpson, I. 213.)

119–20. Cf. *D.M.* I. 1. 514–5.

122–4. A reminiscence, of course, of Christ's words in *Mark*, ix. 45.

133. *weepe poniardes*. Cf. *Much Ado*, II. 1. 257: "She speaks poniards, and every word stabs".

134–5. The same witticism recurs in *A.Y.* III. 2. 43–4.

Cf. Chapman, *May Day* (publ. 1611—note date), I. 1. 37–8. Nares quotes Spenser, *F.Q.* IV. 1. 28:

> With matchlesse eares deformed and distort.

(*I.e.* ears that were not symmetrical.)

141. *blowne up*: cf. *D.M.* III. 2. 187–8; where the metaphor of a mine being exploded under one's feet is clearer. Cf. too Beaum. and Fl., *Scornful Lady*, v. 4: "I knew it, and mined with you, and so blew you up".

150. A finely characteristic utterance of the cold Flamineo, with its suggestion of a long and weary experience of the way man "makes the vow he will not keep".

152. *impostume*: abscess (Gr. ἀπόστημα, confused with Lat. *postumus*).

162. *stand*: hold out. More usually "stand up"—a technical hunting term. Cf. Turberville, *Book of Hunting*, 165: "I have also seene an Hare run and stand up two houres before a kennell of hounds".

165. *quat*: squat (especially of a hare).

171. *ferret...blowing*. After much vain inquiry into the habits of ferrets, I am enabled by the kindness of Mr E. M. Forster to enclose this highly practical communication from an anonymous correspondent: "Now about the ferret. It is a superstition and not a fact that blowing at a ferret forces it to let go of the thing its teeth are fixed in. The most effective measure I have yet found is the pinching of the end of

its tail. I had the courage, or, to give it its real name, stupidity, once to put my hand into a box to rescue a small kitten from a ferret, and the ferret resenting my humane action, sank its teeth into my thumb. I hit it, I blew at it, and I plunged it into a bucket of water, but it refused to relinquish its affectionate grip; and then a man came along and pinched its tail, and it let go".

173. *forgetfull wine*. Cf. *C.C.* III. 1. 26. Perhaps originally suggested by the "obliviosus Massicus" of Horace (*Odes* II. 7. 21), which in turn goes back to the οἶνος λαθικηδής of Alcaeus.

179–80. *best wine...vinneger*. Cf. Lyly, *Euphues*, 39; and 48: "For as the best wine doth make the sharpest vineger, so the deepest love turneth to the deadlyest hate". (H.D.S.)

183. *still water under a great bridge*. Webster is clearly thinking of London Bridge; which is indeed the actual reading of the later Qq. Old London Bridge was built (1176–1209 A.D.) with broad piers and narrow arches, which produced at certain states of the tide dangerous rapids, especially after the passage of the water had been further obstructed in the sixteenth century by mills and water-works. "With the flood-tide it was impossible, and with the ebb-tide dangerous, to pass through or shoot the arches of the bridge." Hence the proverb: "London Bridge was made for wise men to go over and fools to go under". Chamberlain writes to Carleton (Dec. 18th 1611) that three people have just been drowned in an attempt to shoot the bridge and a fourth saved with difficulty. Perhaps this very mishap was in Webster's mind. Again, the first child of Charles I was prematurely born in 1628 from the shock suffered by the Queen in making the passage; Dryden's Anne Killigrew wrote a poem on an aunt drowned there; and Temple's son and Addison's friend Budgell both chose the moment of shooting the bridge to drown themselves. There is an amusing passage in Canning's *Loves of the Triangles* (1798) describing its dangers, which begins:

> "Shoot we the Bridge?" the venturous Boatmen cry—
> "Shoot we the Bridge!" the exulting Fare reply.

(See Wheatley, *London Past and Present* (1891), II. 418; Borrow, *Lavengro*, XXXI.)

193. *rewarded*: a technical term in hunting and hawking. Cf. Holme, *Armoury* (1688), II. 188/1: "Quarry or Reward, is a gift or reward given the Hounds, being some part of the thing hunted"; and *D.M.* I. 1. 59. C. quotes Montaigne, II. 12: "We share the fruits of our prey with our dogges and hawkes, as a meed of their paine and reward of their industry". But the idea is too general to prove borrowing.

216. *Lay her post-horse*: set relays of post-horses for her. Cf. Hayward, *Edward VI* (1630), 100: "he intended to fly...and laid post-horses, and men, and a boat to that purpose".

224 ff. For this picking of the crocodile's teeth by some bird, a story

long held fabulous, see Herodotus II. 68, Pliny VIII. 25. Herodotus says that the bird removes leeches (which, however, do not exist in the Nile); Pliny, that it takes pieces of meat. According to modern accounts *Pluvianus aegyptius* has actually been seen to pick flies and other morsels from the crocodile's jaws. See *Spectator* for Feb. 13th and 20th 1909; Curzon, *Monasteries in the Levant* (1865), pp. 142–3.

This relation of bird and reptile had already in ancient times become proverbially symbolic of those who serve the great through fear (*Corpus Paroemiograph. Graecorum* (Leutsch), II. 691); in Lyly, on the other hand, as H.D.S. points out, it is an example of gratitude that "the birde Trochilus lyveth by the mouth of the Crocodile and is not spoyled" (*Euphues*, p. 44. Cf. *Euphues and his England*, p. 379).

225. *worme breds i'th teeth of't.* A regular medieval explanation of toothache in general. Cf. *Much Ado*, III. 2. 26–7; Bartholomew, *De Propr. Rerum*, VII. 25, which is painfully vivid: "Wormes brede in the cheke teethe...and this is knowen by itchynge and tyckelinge and contynuall dyggynge and thyrlynge". And see G. G. Coulton, *Social Life in Britain*, 507, for a Welsh remedy from a fourteenth-century MS., for expelling such worms by burning the offending tooth with a mutton-fat candle till they (or the patient) could no longer bear it.

232–3. *quill or pricke on the head.* It is obscure whence this *pricke* is derived. But cf. Bartholomew, *De Propr. Rerum*, XVIII. 33: "and so when he (the crocodile) is full, he lieth by the brink or by the cliff, and bloweth for fullness: and then there cometh a little bird, which is called king of fowls among the Italians, and this bird flieth tofore his mouth, and sometime he putteth the bird off, and at last he openeth his mouth to the bird and suffereth him enter. And this bird claweth him first with claws softly, and maketh him have a manner liking in clawing, and [he] falleth anon asleep, and when this bird knoweth and perceiveth that this beast sleepeth, anon he descendeth into his womb, and forthwith *sticketh him as it were with a dart*, and biteth him full grievously and full sore. The crocodile is right nesh (soft) and full tender in the womb, and for that cause he is soon overcome of such fishes, which have sharp pricks and crests growing on their backs on high".

Here we have apparently a confusion between the crocodile-bird; the ichneumon which Pliny (VIII. 25) describes as "shooting himself" down the crocodile's throat and biting a way out through his belly; and the dolphins which Pliny also describes as "punching and cutting" the crocodile underneath with their sharp fins. A confusion similar to this, or based on this, seems to have existed in Webster's mind.

238–41. Flamineo's explanation that Vittoria is the crocodile and must not estrange Brachiano the crocodile-bird, is quite clear, though far-fetched. But it is equally clear, I think, that all the same Flamineo really meant, what Brachiano suggests, that Brachiano was the un-

grateful crocodile, he himself the serviceable bird, which can yet defend itself at need. Only he draws back, when pressed to avow it, daunted by the hidden menace in Brachiano's tone. In any case one may suspect that Webster had an entry on crocodiles in his commonplace-book which he could not bear not to use: and that he might have replied to us like his successor Beddoes, when taxed with the inappropriateness of a similar piece of natural history, "I will sacrifice my raven to you; but my crocky is really very dear to me".

IV. 3.

Outer stage. The Cardinal of Aragon of course appears on the balcony.

9. *Knight of Rhodes.* The order of Knights of St John of Jerusalem was founded in the Holy City during the First Crusade. After the fall of the Latin kingdom in 1291 they made Rhodes their head-quarters from 1310 till its capture by Suleiman the Magnificent in 1522. In 1530 Charles V gave them Malta, which remained theirs until the surrender to Napoleon in 1798. Their habit was a black mantle with a Maltese or eight-pointed cross.

9. *Knight of S. Michael*: an order founded by Louis XI in 1469. It was however so cheapened during the sixteenth century under Charles IX, that Henri III was driven in 1578 to found the new order of the *Saint Esprit* mentioned in the next line but one, to take rank above it, though the order of St Michael was not actually abolished till 1830.

10. *the golden fleece.* This order was founded by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy on his marriage-day, Jan. 10th 1429–30. The origin of its ensign, the Golden Fleece, is variously attributed to the legends of Jason and of Gideon, to the colour of the hair of one of the Duke's mistresses, to the Flanders wool-trade, and to the Lamb of God. Motley combines the two last. We may certainly compare for this the adoption by the Merchant Taylors of the Holy Lamb in the Sun-beams.

12. *th'Annuntiation.* The Order of the Annunziata, still the highest in the kingdom of Italy, was founded by Amadeus VI of Savoy in 1362, its badge being a silver collar of love-knots and roses, in honour of the fifteen Joys of the Virgin; while its dress was of white satin embroidered with silk, over which was a cloak of purple velvet embroidered with purple and gold.

13. *th'honoured Garter.* The exact date of its foundation is uncertain (1346–8), its origin still more so—being variously attributed to the Countess of Salisbury's garter, to an episode in the Eastern warfare of Richard I, or in the French wars of Edward III, or simply to a tournament.

19 ff. This picturesque episode from the ceremonial of a Papal election must have been fascinating to an audience of Elizabethan heretics.

Even on the modern stage it remains impressive. The details are mainly accurate, so far as they go.

The curious regulations of the Papal conclave arose from the vital need of securing a free and uncorrupt election, without incurring dangerous delays through disagreement. Its present form dates, in essentials, from the constitution *Urbi periculum* (1274) of Gregory X, who had himself only been elected after a deadlock of thirty-three months. He ordained that the cardinals must meet in closed conclave ten days after the Pope's death, with only one servant each; and stay there till they had duly elected a successor. They were, on pain of excommunication, to have no intercourse with the outer world except through a single guarded window (cf. 36), by which their food was brought. The food itself was cut down as the conclave went on, being restricted after eight days to bread and water with a little wine. It was subsequently enacted that there should be twice daily a "scrutiny" (*scrutinium*; cf. 39) or secret ballot; followed, if necessary, by an "*accessus*", or second ballot, in which votes could be transferred to the leading candidates in the "*scrutinium*". When a candidate has at last obtained the necessary two-thirds of the votes and accepted his election, there follows his investiture in the papal robes (*immantatio*), the first "obedience" or homage (*adoratio*: cf. 40), and then the proclamation to the world, made (till 1870) by the senior cardinal-deacon from the central balcony of St Peter's overlooking the great Piazza.

29 ff. The French Ambassador does not know his own business very well, to need to be told all this.

40. *admiration*: really "adoration" (see note on 19 ff.). But there is no need to alter the text; it would be quite like Webster to get the term slightly wrong.

45 ff. "I announce to you tidings of great joy. The Most Reverend Cardinal Lorenzo di Monticelso has been elected to the Papal Throne and has taken the title of Paul the Fourth.—

Long live the Holy Father, Paul the Fourth."

The historic Felice Peretti, Cardinal Montalto, really became Sixtus the Fifth.

58–9. Cf. Pope, *Prologue to the Satires*:

> To please a mistress one aspersed his life;
> He lashed him not, but let her be his wife.

62–3. "We grant you the Apostolic benediction and remission of sins."

85–7. *Italian beggars . . . owne sakes.* From Montaigne, III. 5: "In the same stile I have heard some beg in Italy: *Fate bene per voi*: 'Do some goode for your selfe'". (C.)

88–90. A confused reminiscence of Montaigne's views on liberality (III. 6): "I would rather teach him the verse of the ancient labourer:

> τῇ χειρὶ δεῖ σπείρειν ἀλλὰ μὴ ὅλῳ τῷ θυλακῷ.
> Not whole sackes, but by the hand,
> A man should sow his seed i' the land".

Which in its turn is based on Corinna's advice to the youthful Pindar, that he should sow his mythological details with the hand and not by the sackful (Plut. *Moralia* 348 A). Cf. *Mon. Col.* 39–40; *Char.* "A Noble and Retir'd Housekeeper", 1–3.

96. *Barbarie horse*. Cf. Blundeville in his *Art of Riding* (2nd ed. 1580—quoted by Ridgeway, *Origin of the Thoroughbred Horse*, p. 377): "Those horses that we commonlie call Barbarians, do come out of the King of Tunnis' land, out of Massilie Numidia, which for the most part be but little Horses, but therewith verie swift, and able to make a verie long cariere, which is the cause why we esteeme them so much".

97. *carreere*: "to run your horse forthright at his full speed, and then making him stop quickly, suddeinly, firme, and close on his buttock". (G. Markham, *Cheape and Good Husbandry* (1631 ed.), p. 34.) The distance was usually four to five score yards; and the sudden stop was an essential part of it. (Cf. Madden, *Diary of Master William Silence*, p. 287.)

98. *'sault*: a general term for various leaps to which a horse was trained. Cf. Blundeville in *Sh.'s Eng.* II. 415: "to bound aloft, to yerke (lash out with the heels) withall, to gallop the gallop galliard, to fetch the Capriole (goat-leap), to do the Corvette (curvet, *i.e.* 'pransing and dansing up and downe still in one place'), and *such kinds of saults*".

98. *ring galliard*: a mixture of bounding forward, curvetting, and yerking. For details see Markham, *Cavelarice*, II. ch. 22.

99. *French Rider*: the French being famous for their horsemanship.

113. *oretane*: got the better of, overreached.

123–4. *Eugh-tree...graves*. Cf. I. 2. 222 ff.

V. 1.

Whole stage, probably. After an interval of some weeks?

8. *rudiments*: "principles", without the modern sense of *rudimentary* principles (Lat. *rudis*).

15–6. *strickt order of Capuchins*: the epithet was well earned by this "poorest of all orders", which branched off from the Franciscans about 1528 with the ideal of returning to the severest austerities of St Francis, and became an independent order a little after Webster wrote—in 1619, when they are said to have had fifteen hundred houses and formed one of the strongest forces of the Counter-Reformation.

19. *Malta...knighted*: *i.e.* in the order of Saint John of Jerusalem. See on IV. 3. 9.

23–4. Perhaps this austerity was suggested by Montaigne, I. 40, where it is related that William Duke of Guienne "for penance-sake, wore continually a corselet under a religious habit". (C.)

38–9. Cf. *D.M.* IV. 2. 141–2; *D.L.* IV. 2. 121. Possibly from *Arcadia*,

III. (*Wks.* I. 386): "now the nearer danger approched (like the light of a glow-worme) the lesse still it seemed". But the resemblance may well be coincidence.

Cf. "Beaum. and Fl.", *Elder Brother*, IV. 1 (of court-gallants):

> You gaudy glow-worms, carrying seeming fire,
> Yet have no heat within you.

The word is indeed regularly applied to persons of paltry eminence. Cf. Burton, *Anatomy*, II. 3. 2: "an outside, a gloworme, a proud foole, an arrant asse".

41. *You'are*: see on III. 2. 267.

44. *inly*: deeply, to the heart.

49–50. *crave Your leave . . . revells*: *i.e.* pray you to excuse my absence *while* I furnish out the revels.

53. *Barriers*: see on I. 2. 27.

60. *presence*: presence-chamber.

67. *paire of beades*: *pair* can mean a set not only of two, but of any number. So "a pair of cards", "a pair of stairs". Cf. Germ. *ein paar*.

68. *the pummell of his saddle*. This was a common method of poisoning, at least in the belief of the time. Thus in 1598, as Reed points out, one Edward Squire, employed in the Queen's stable, was "hanged, bowelled, and quartered" at Tyburn for having tried in the previous year to poison the pommel of her saddle with some drug given him by the Jesuits in Spain, where he had been a prisoner—"her Majesty being like to rest her hand thereupon for a good time together, and not unlike for her hand to come often about her face, mouth, and nostrils". Squire had made an equally unsuccessful attempt to poison the pommels of Essex's chair on the Islands Voyage. It is of some interest that the account of the episode attributed to Bacon (1599: Spedding, *Bacon's Works, Life and Letters*, II. 109–19) states Squire, like Lodovico, to have taken the sacrament beforehand. Pedro Mexia (*Treasurie*, II. 17) discusses doubtfully the "common report, that Saddles of Horses may be impoysoned. . . . The Turkes that inhabit higher *Misia*, are saide to be skilfull maisters in such exercises" Cf. Shirley, *Traitor*, III. 1.

72. *His soule into the hazzard*. Cf. *Hen. V*, I. 2. 262–3:

> We will in France, by God's grace, play a set
> Shall strike his father's crown into the hazard.

There are in a tennis-court three hazards or winning openings, two on one side (the hazard side), one on the other (the service side). By striking the ball into these the player gains a point. Shakespeare's use of the metaphor is accordingly more appropriate than Webster's. For to strike into the hazard is a *winning* stroke. Henry is going, as he should, to win his point, and so the crown of France; whereas Brachiano is going to lose his own soul. Webster may either have

borrowed from Shakespeare without thinking, or perhaps without knowing, enough of the game; or he may have been influenced by the other sense of "hazard" = "jeopardy".

This desire to destroy soul as well as body is typical of the age. Cf. *Hamlet*, III. 3. 88–95 (where Steevens also notes this parallel); and Nash's *Unfortunate Traveller*, a book which throws an unforgettable light on the darker side, the naked savagery of the Elizabethans (ed. Brett-Smith, pp. 120–1), where an Italian murderer first makes his victim consign his soul to perdition with the most horrible imprecations, on condition that his life shall be spared; and then shoots him in the mouth to prevent him recanting.

73. Scan:

I would | have *our* | plot bee | ingen | ious.

89–90. *To raise the devill. . . lay him downe*: there is a similar *double entendre* in *Romeo and Juliet*, II. 1. 23 ff.

92. *burres*. Cf. *Mids. Night's Dream*, III. 2. 260:

Hang off, thou cat, thou burr!

95–6. Zanche's idea of addressing Francisco in Moorish is, dramatically, a slight mistake since it rouses a false expectation that his imposture will thereby be revealed.

100–1. Cf. *D.M.* III. 1. 111.

102. *stincking breath*. Cf. the German proverb *Selbstlob stinkt*.

112. *patent to beg*: given by a J.P. See on v. 6. 16.

113. *tell them stories*: seeing how eloquently he brags about himself.

120. *hung with Arras*: *i.e.* to give opportunity for concealment.

126. *pigeons*: a standard popular grievance. Cf. Harrison's *Description of England* (in Holinshed), III. 2: "pigeons now an hurtfull foule by reason of their multitudes, and number of houses dailie erected for their increase (which the bowres (boors) of the countrie call in scorne almes houses, and dens of theeves, and such like)". Statute 3 and 4 Edward VI, c. 5. para. 2 is directed against illegal assemblies for, among other things, destroying Dove Houses. Cf. too Selden, *Table Talk*: "Some men make it a case of conscience, whether a man may have a Pidgeon-house, because his Pidgeons eat other Folks Corn. But there is no such thing as Conscience in the business, the matter is, whether he be a man of such Quality, that the State allows him to have a Dove-house, if so there's an end of the business, his Pidgeons have a right to eat where they please themselves". Similarly in the mid-seventeenth century Milton's friend Hartlib in his *Legacy of Husbandry* complains that there are often three pigeon-cotes in a parish and estimates their ravages at six million quarters of grain a year. Rogers, however, (*Hist. of Agric.* v. 59) not unnaturally regards this as exaggerated.

138. *dogdaies*: see on III. 3. 67.

149–50. *wolfe by the eares*. In origin, a Greek proverb—τῶν ὤτων ἔχω τὸν λύκον· οὔτε γὰρ ἔχειν οὔτ' ἀφεῖναι δύναμαι—"I hold the

wolf by the ears; for I can neither hold on nor let go." The Latin equivalent, *lupum auribus teneo*, occurs in Terence, *Phormio* 506, and was applied by Tiberius to his own perilous tenure of power (Sueton. *Tib.* 25).

Webster, if he already knew the *Arcadia*, might have found it applied there (*Wks.* II. 12) to Zelmane, who, in her relations with Gynecia, "was, as the proverbe saith, like them that hold the wolfe by the eares, bitten while they hold, and slaine if they loose".

156. *Gipsie*: "baggage", with allusion also to her dark skin.

163. This agreeable proverb is found in Florio's *First Fruites* (1578), in Cotgrave (1611), and in N. Ireland to the present day (W. J. Craig, quoted by Sampson).

164. *Beleeve it!* The sense seems to be—"You may talk of the penalties of promiscuity. Much you really believe it, when you are so easily seduced from me by a little finery!"

164–5. *painting. . .loath me*: *i.e.* these other women with a little paint make you turn cold to me. Some however read *love me* for *loath me*: see Text. Note.

166–9. The application of the fable is presumably that Flamineo (the dog) is not going to let go Zanche (the flesh) for the sake of such shadows as these painted women.

If however *love*, not *loath*, is the right reading, Flamineo's reply must mean that he loves the substance in Zanche, not the shadow. But this is feeble; and what is he, in that case, in danger of letting go?

172. *tumbling*: with the usual *double entendre*.

174–5. *,both drawers on*: *i.e.* salt bacon draws men on to drink, just as a shoemaker draws shoes on to their feet. Sampson quotes Diccon's remark, in *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, I. 1. on "a slyp of bacon" which he means to use "for a shoeinghorn to draw on two pots of ale".

178. *haggard*: wanton. See on IV. 2. 83.

179. *strike i'th Court.* Such violence was regarded as contempt of the King's Court, and was punishable with death by ancient law dating from before the Conquest. By 33 Hen. VIII (1541), c. 12, malicious striking in the palace, which drew blood, was punishable with perpetual imprisonment and fine at the King's pleasure, and the loss of the striker's right hand. (Stephen, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 16th ed. 1914, IV. 156.)

181. *bedstaffe*: *i.e.* one of the staves laid across the bedstocks, to support the bedding, in place of a modern wire-mattress. Also, a kind of staff used for making a bed, especially when it stood in a recess. The use meant here is doubtless an indecent one.

184. An allusion to the proverb:

> A spaniel, a woman, and a walnut-tree,
> The more they're beaten, the better still they be.

Or in Latin:

> Nux, asinus, mulier simili sunt lege ligata;
> Haec tria nil recte faciunt, si verbera cessant.

192. *With a fan of feathers?* Marcello's feathered hat? Cf. *Ind. Malc.* 33–4.

193–4. *cholericke...Rubarbe.* Cf. *D.M.* II. 5. 18; and Lyly, *Euphues and his England*, p. 411: "the roote *Rubarbe*, which beeinge full of choler, purgeth choler".

198. *sonnes of Oedipus*: Eteocles and Polynices, who according to their father's curse died by each other's hands in single combat for the throne of Thebes. But their hate was too bitter to die even with them; and when their bodies, according to one legend, were burnt together, "the very flames turned two waies" (*exundant diviso vertice flammae*—Statius, *Thebais*, XII. 431); and Pausanias (IX. 18. 3) relates that, ever after, when men sacrificed to them, the flame and smoke of the offering parted in twain. Cf. Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 68.

201. *Doe like the geesse in the progresse.* A very obscure passage, probably corrupt. Dyce leaves it unexplained. Sampson can only suggest an allusion to the geese that saved the Capitol and fought with their tongues only. Cf. *N.Ho!* v. 1 (p. 254): "captains...that fight, as the geese saved the Capitol, only with prattling". But how can "in the progresse" mean "in the Capitol"?

Or the passage might be explained by Lyly, *Euphues*, p. 109: "Wilt thou resemble the kinde Spaniel, which the more he is beaten the fonder he is, (cf. l. 184 above) or the foolish Giesse, which wil never away?" So that Flamineo would mean: "If you want a fight, you have only to dog my heels like a goose". But "in the progresse" remains obscure. Possibly there was some popular saying which would provide a clue. If one wished to be ingenious, one *could* suggest that the nursery-rhyme "Goosey Goosey Gander" was known as the "Goose's Progress", and that "like the geesse in the progresse, you know where you shall finde mee" meant "in my lady's (Zanche's) chamber". (A stop might be placed after *Doe.*) But I cannot seriously propose this. Personally I have no doubt that *gestes* (stopping-places on a progress) is the right reading, with a comma or semi-colon after *Doe.* But for conjectural emendations see Text. Note.

203. *And*: if.

209. *Spring at Michaelmas*: St Martin's Summer. Cf. Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour* (1669), 16. x. 210/1: "God promised him a Michaelmas spring (I may so say), a son in his old age".

221. Perhaps a metaphor from driving inwards a rash like small-pox. Cf. *F.M.I.* II. 2. 29–31.

v. 2.

Outer stage.

10. *this Crucifix*: one hanging from Cornelia's neck.

18. *turne your gaule up*: *N.E.D.* does not quote this or any parallel use. The nearest is "to break a person's gall" = "to break his spirit". It is indeed not quite clear whether the phrase here is figurative, of dying; or literal, because Marcello is vomiting from his wound. Probably the former.

38–40. Cf. *Lear*, v. 3. 262 ff.:

> She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass;
> If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
> Why, then she lives...
> This feather stirs; she lives!

40. *loose*: lose.

67. *graz'd*: "grassed", "lost in the grass". *N.E.D.* does not recognize this spelling, which may indeed be incorrect and due to a confusion between *graz'd* or *gras'd* (from *to graze*) and *gras't* (from *to grass*) which is the word intended here.

For the form *grast* cf. Hacket, *Abp. Williams*, II. 20: "One arrow must be shot after another, though both be *grast*, and never found again". And for the idea, familiar at the time, cf. Hall, *Characters* (*Wks.* 1634, I. 178 D) of the Ambitious: "a small hope... perswading him (like foolish boies) to shoot away a second shaft, that he may find the first". Similarly *Merch. of Ven.* I. 1. 141:

> In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft
> I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
> The self-same way, with more advised watch
> To find the other forth, and by adventuring both,
> I oft found both.

77. *You once did brave mee*: in IV. 2.

v. 3.

Whole stage: the barriers being probably fought in the "study".

Stage Direction: for "barriers" see on I. 2. 27. Of the historical Bracciano it is recorded that in 1568 he erected a wooden theatre, where as champion he fought "una sbarra con diverse armi".

9. *Remove the barre*: probably the bar of the helmet rather than (as Sampson) "one or all of the bars enclosing the space within which they fought". The first makes better sense; and the barrier in "barriers" was between, not round, the combatants.

18–20. This certainly looks as if it were influenced by *Arcadia*, III. (*Wks.* I. 427): "I sweare, that Death bringes nothing with it to grieve me, but that I must leave thee, and cannot remaine to answere part of thy infinit deserts". I doubt the assertion of Crawford, that

Webster shows no knowledge of Sidney's romance before *The Duchess of Malfi*.

22. *without booke*. To know a thing "without book" is to know it by heart, thoroughly (cf. *Twelfth Night*, I. 3. 28: "He speaks three or four languages word for word, without book"). The sense here is: "You are past masters in the art of killing—that you can do without even turning to consult your works on medicine; it is in healing that your art fails you utterly".

27. S. Minto (*Characteristics of Eng. Poets*) pointed out that it was by kissing Brachiano's likeness that his first wife, Isabella, had actually died.

32–3. Cf. in Drayton's *Mortimeriados* (v. xlii.) the omens of Edward II's death:

> Under his Eave the buzzing Screech-owle sings,
> Beating the Windowes with her fatall Wings.

37. *Franciscans*: *i.e.* the Capuchins already mentioned, their order being a subdivision of the Franciscans and not made independent till 1619. See on v. 1. 15–6.

52. *some men*: an ironic under-statement.

53. *within compasse o'th verge*. This does not mean "within the boundaries of the horizon, or the earth", as Sampson suggests. The *verge* was an area extending to a distance of twelve miles round the King's Court, which lay under the jurisdiction of the Lord High Steward (from Lat. *virga*, the steward's rod of office). Cf. N. Bacon, *Discov. of the Uniformity of the Govt. of Eng.* I. 68. 285: "All cases *vi et armis* where one (party)...was of the household, (or committed within the verge), were handled in the court of the Verge, or the Marshal's court". Hence the Marshalsea Court, which was only abolished in 1849.

55. *wolfe in a womans breast*. Cf. *D.M.* II. 1. 56: "ulcerous Woolfe". Cf. also Barrough, *Meth. Physicke* (1590), 331: "Lupus is a malignant ulcer quickly consuming the neather parts; and it is very hungry like unto a woolfe"; and Sir T. Browne, *Pseudodoxia*, IV. 10.

This literalistic misunderstanding of what was originally a metaphor (cf. the Greek ἀλώπηξ, "fox", of the baldness which gnaws away the hair on the temples) seems to have persisted even into modern times. Cf. *Vocab. of E. Anglia* (R. Forby, enlarged by W. Rye, 1895): "A poor woman whose husband had long been thus afflicted, (with a cancer),...told the author, that the Doctors had found the wolf, and carried it away".

56. *fed with poultry*: *i.e.* with a pigeon or the like applied to the sore; a regular treatment, for centuries, of diseases of this sort. Thus the ulcer in the historical Bracciano's thigh was given raw meat to feed on, to prevent it preying on his flesh: and Casanova in his *Mémoires* (ed. Flammarion, IV. 215) mentions that the physician Tronchin treated Villars, the Governor of Provence, by feeding the sores in his back with slices of veal. See on *D.M.* II. 1. 40.

Doubtless *fed with poultry* is also used here with its proverbial sense of "fed on the fat of the land". Cf. "Chapman", *Revenge for Honour*, I. 1. 19–21:

> Tis believ'd, coz,
> And by the wisest few too, that i' th' camp
> You do not feed on pleasant poults.

83. *convayd coyne forth*: a serious medieval offence, forbidden by statute after statute—2 Hen. VI, c. 6, 17 Edw. IV, c. 1 (which complains that the law is broken "to the great impoverishing of the same Realm and final destruction of the treasure of the same Realm, if hasty Remedy be not provided"), 4 Hen. VII, c. 23, 1 Hen. VIII, c. 13, 3 Hen. VIII, c. 1.

88–9. *raven...blacknesse*. Cf. *Troil. and Cress.* II. 3. 225: "The raven chides blackness".

91. *quailes*: the word in Elizabethan slang means also "loose women", quails being amorous birds. Cf. *Troil. and Cress.* v. 1. 57: "Agamemnon...one that loves quails".

93. *That old dog-fox...Florence*. Cf. *Troil. and Cress.* v. 4. 12: "that same dog-fox, Ulysses".

101. *codpeece...full of pinnes*: according to the fashion of the time. Thus J. Winchcomb, the famous clothier of Newbury, appeared before Henry VIII in "slopps which had a great codpiece whereon he stuck his pins". Cf. *Tyro's Roaring Megg* (1598—quoted by Steevens on *Two Gent. of Verona*, II. 7. 53):

> And that same perking longitude before
> Which for a pin-case antique plowmen wore.

104. *great rose...on's shooe*. Large silk rosettes, costing sometimes as much as £5, came into fashion at the end of the sixteenth century; and were clearly popular on the stage, for Hamlet asks if he might be given a place in a travelling company if he came in "a forest of feathers" with "two Provincial roses" on his shoes (*Ham.* III. 2. 291–3). Devils with their cloven hoofs naturally found them particularly convenient wear. Cf. Jonson, *The Devil is an Ass* (1616), I. 2:

> my heart was at my mouth
> Till I had view'd his shoes well; for those roses
> Were big enough to hide a cloven foot.

See too (H.D.S.) Chapman, *Caesar and Pompey*, II. 1. 160–2.

106. *linguist*: here "master of language", "eloquent disputant"; not "master of languages" or "polyglot". So Wood, *Athen. Oxon.* I. 373, calls R. Martin, the "noted disputant", "a plausible Linguist and eminent for several Speeches spoken in Parliaments".

Naturally the Tempter has always, from Eden onwards, needed a persuasive tongue: cf. the Gk. Πειθώ (Persuasion) as the personification of the voice of temptation, persuading Helen, for instance, to fly with Paris.

109. *O! 'ly*: the apostrophe serves to mark that the syllable preceding is passed quickly over. Cf. v. 1. 41.

114. *whipt*: edged. R. O. Heslop's *Northumberland Words*, quoted in Wright's *Eng. Dialect Dict.* (*s.v.* "whip"), says the term properly means "To run a series of loops or stitches along the edge of material at one insertion of the needle. In doing this the needle is rapidly turned over and under the edge alternately, producing a temporarily sewn edge which prevents fraying of the cloth". The idea of rapidity seems the only connection between this sense and the commoner one—"to move quickly".

118. *Arras powder*: powdered orris or iris root, a white powder with a scent of violets. Cf. *D.M.* III. 2. 68.

Are we to suppose, as Greg suggests, that "much living" has whitened Vittoria's hair, which was so black in Act I? Just as Mary Stuart, so like Vittoria in some ways, was white-haired before her time, when she went to the block at Fotheringay? But Mary Stuart had suffered for long years; Vittoria but little; and surely we picture that proud, hard head falling in untouched splendour before Lodovico's dagger in the closing scene. After all, Brachiano's ravings are not evidence. And H.D.S. points out that powdering the hair was just coming into fashion in England at this time.

119. *in the Pastrie*: the place where pastry is made (note the capital letter for the special or technical term). The analogy of "buttery" has been suggested; but "buttery" is really *bouteillerie* and has nothing to do with butter. The Pastry was one of the twenty subsidiary offices of the Lord Steward's department in the Elizabethan Court, each of them having a Sergeant at its head and a special staff. The Woodyard (*D.M.* II. 2. 66) was another of them. (See Chambers, *Eliz. Stage*, I. 35.)

121. *Hee will bee drunke*: for this imputation on the clergy, cf. the drunken secular priest in *D.M.* IV. 2. 98.

123. *six gray rats that have lost their tailes*: this at once recalls "Three Blind Mice", of which rhyme a somewhat different version from ours, with music, occurs in *Deuteromelia or the second part of Musick's Melodie* (1609). See Halliwell, *Nursery Rhymes* (Percy Society, IV.).

124–5. *a Rat-cat[c]her...a miracle.* Perhaps, as Sampson suggests, a reminiscence of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, whose legend is possibly connected with the Children's Crusade, or else with a medieval outburst of dancing mania. (June 26th 1284 is the traditional date of his exploit.) Cf. Shirley, *Honoria and Mammon*, III. 1:

> He looks like the pyed piper in Germany,
> That undertook to cure the town of rats.

Or there may be a reference to St Patrick; cf. the allusions elsewhere in Webster to the freedom of Ireland from vermin.

Court Rat-catchers and Mole-takers were part of the regular royal

establishment and under the Lord Chamberlain. (Chambers, *Eliz. Stage*, I. 48.)

126. *foule vermin...Flamineo.* Note the bitter juxtaposition; surely more than coincidence.

130. "Give heed, Lord Brachiano."

135 ff. "Lord Brachiano, thou wast wont to be guarded in battle by thy shield; *this* shield thou shalt now oppose to thine infernal enemy."

"Once with thy spear thou didst prevail in battle; *this* sacred spear thou shalt now wield against the enemy of souls."

"Give heed, Lord Brachiano; if now also thou approvest what hath been done betwixt us, bow thine head to the right."

"Be of good cheer, Lord Brachiano; think how many good deeds thou hast done; lastly be mindful that my soul stands pledged for thine, if any peril there should be."

"If now also thou approvest what hath been done betwixt us, bow thine head to the left."

139–40. *si nunc quòque probas...flecte Caput in dextrum*: for this communication by signs between the speechless sick and the priest cf. the account of Elizabeth's last hours in Chamberlain's letter to Carleton, March 30th 1603 (Birch): "The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, the almoner, and other her chaplains and divines, had access to her in her sickness divers times, to whom she gave good testimony of her faith by word, but specially towards her end by signs, when she was speechless, and would not suffer the archbishop to depart as long as she had sense, but held him twice or thrice when he was going".

157 ff. Baker suggests a topical allusion to the charges brought against Leicester (especially in a pamphlet of 1584 called *Leicester's Commonwealth*) of having murdered his wife Amy Robsart. He was alleged to have had her thrown down the staircase at Cumnor Place (at the foot of which she was found dead on Sept. 8th 1560), after vain attempts to poison her, in order to be free to wed the Queen. The Spanish Ambassador de Quadra wrote home before Amy Robsart's death that the Queen and Leicester were attempting to poison her—"They have given out that she was ill, but she was not ill at all; she was very well, and taking care not to be poisoned". There are also certain suspicious circumstances such as Leicester's absence from the funeral and, more important, his definite tampering with the jury at the inquest. And according to *Leicester's Commonwealth* (1641 ed. p. 36) in his funeral sermon "Dr Babington, my Lord's Chaplain, once or twice tripped in his speech in commending to their memory 'that virtuous Lady so pitifully murdered' instead of 'so pitifully slain'". The general modern view is, however, that the death was more probably suicide due to jealousy. (But see W. Rye, *The Murder of Amy Robsart*, 1885.)

There is another probable allusion to the episode in *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (1608):

> The surest way to charm a woman's tongue
> Is break her neck—a politician did it.

(Cf. "the famous Pollititian" in 155 above.) And Webster himself makes a similar but clearer reference to another Elizabethan tradition, the story of the Countess of Nottingham and Essex's ring in *D.L.* III. 3. 304 ff. It is even *possible*, I think, that the highly unplausible story of Camillo's breaking his neck on a vaulting-horse (which has no counterpart in Webster's source) was suggested by the equally unplausible story of the Countess breaking her neck down the stairs (cf. III. 2. 117).

A further allusion to Leicester has been seen by some in the name "Doctor Julio". For Leicester too had an Italian physician called Giulio Borgarucci, whom *Leicester's Commonwealth* is in the habit of calling simply "Doctor Julio"; and the Earl was popularly supposed to have made full use of him and similar tools. Thus Sir Nicholas Throgmorton was said to have been poisoned "in a sallet at supper" with the Earl (1571); Lord Sheffield to have been similarly poisoned in London by an Italian physician of Leicester; and the Earl of Essex, whose Countess became later Leicester's wife and was reputed to have been his mistress, died in 1576 "of an extreme flux, caused by an Italian recipe, as all his friends are well assured; the maker whereof was a Surgeon (as is believed) that then was newly come to my Lord from Italy. A cunning man and sure in operation". (*Leic. Commonw.* p. 23.) Dr Bayly, another of Leicester's poisoners, was alleged to have asserted "that poison might so be tempered and given as it should not appear presently, and yet should kill the party afterward at what time should be appointed.... So though one die of a flux, and another of a catarrh, yet this *imputeth* little to the matter but sheweth rather the great cunning and skill of the artificer". (*Leic. Commonw.* p. 24.)

Cf. *D.L.* III. 2, where Romelio, disguised as "a rare Italienated Jew" and physician, imagines how he would

> poyson a friend
> With pulling but a loose haire from's beard, or give a drench,
> He should linger of't nine yeares, and nere complaine,
> But in the Spring and Fall, and so the cause
> *Imputed* to the disease naturall.

Further, when we remember the conjuring-scene combined with poisoning earlier in the play, it is interesting to note that Leicester was also accused of having "Dee and Allen (two atheists) for figuring and conjuring, Julio the Italian and Lopez the Jew for poisoning". (*Leic. Commonw.* p. 71.)

Lastly we may be reminded of Romelio's scheme for getting rid of his two surgeons in *D.L.* III. 3. 225 ff. by "waging them to the

East Indies", when we read of Leicester's own supposed policy—"He would not trust his familiars above one year, but either transported them for service or wafted them to another world". (Bohun, *Full Account of the Character of Queen Elizabeth* (1693), p. 84.)

It is quite possible, then, that in this passage Webster may have meant his audience to think of Leicester and Amy Robsart; it is still more likely that he was at any rate thinking of them himself. On the other hand the discovery of topical allusions in Elizabethan Drama easily becomes a mania; and it is dangerously easy to see the representation of an individual in what is really only the picture of an age. In any case the details given above have their value; for they at least show how familiar and commonplace, in the final corruption of the Renaissance, such traits as these had become, though Webster has been accused of melodramatically inventing them out of all relation to reality.

162. *Mercarie*: corrosive sublimate, mercuric chloride; not the metal itself, which is mentioned in the next line.

162. *copperesse*: blue copperas is sulphate of copper, green, of iron, white, of zinc: all are poisonous in sufficient quantities, though they are not extremely so.

170. It is perhaps fanciful to note that Brachiano's last terrible cry for the woman he loved follows upon the taunt that he will be forgotten immediately and utterly—as though in that thought lay the supreme agony of all.

178. *snuffe*: the metaphor is of a candle—the "last spark" of life.

178. *woman-keeper*: nurses were popularly suspected of often hastening tiresome patients to a better world. Sampson quotes from Besant, *London*, p. 392, a sentence of an anonymous tract, *The Wonderful Year* (1603): "Neither shall you wring out of my pen...the villainies of that damnd Keeper, who killd all she kept".

Cf. Jonson, *Volpone*, I. 1:

> Faith, I could stifle him rarely with a pillow,
> As well as any woman that should keep him;

and Defoe, *Journal of the Plague Year* (1882), pp. 110–2.

186. *more rivers to the Cittie*: a reference, as Sampson points out, to Sir Hugh Myddelton's New River which ran from near Ware to Islington (about 39 miles). He had begun work on it on April 21st 1609 and undertaken to complete it within four years. In 1611, however, owing to the obstruction of landowners he had to ask for an extension of time, which was granted. On March 23rd 1612 the King agreed to pay half the expense in return for half the profits; and it was finished at Michaelmas, 1613. Thus during the writing and performance of the play it was a subject continually exciting fresh interest.

187. *good cheape*: cf. *bon marché* (*cheape* = market).

188. *Moonish*: changeable as the moon. Cf. *As You Like It*, III. 2. 436:

"a moonish youth...changeable, longing and liking; proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles, for every passion something, and for no passion truly anything".

192. *scores best*: gets most on credit (scored up to his account), without paying cash.

199. *tickles you to death...die laughing*. Cf. Montaigne, I. 40, where a criminal is related to have "wished the hangman not to touch his throat, lest hee should make him swowne with laughing, because hee was so ticklish". (C.)

200. *saffron*. Cf. Gerard, *Herball* (1633 ed.), p. 152: "the moderate use of it is good for the head, and maketh the senses more quicke and lively, shaketh off heavie and drousie sleepe, and maketh a man merry". Sampson quotes Rabelais, *Gargantua*, I. x: "And as Avicen speaketh...of the saffron, that it doth so rejoice the heart, that if you take of it excessively, it will by superfluous resolution and dilation, deprive it altogether of life".

202. Quite misunderstood, I think, by Sampson, who takes the line to mean—"It (what?) jumps on ice, in order to teach court-honesty (*i.e.* to expose, unmask it)". But the sense is surely: "This feat (of sudden, stealthy murder) is executed in a moment; in such a way *as to teach court-honesty* (the petty intriguers of a court) *that it jumps on ice* (lives in perpetual peril)". The comma which stands in Q after *-honestie*, merely marks a pause in speech. For the "ice" metaphor, cf. *D.M.* v. 2. 368–9.

204. *descant*: *lit.* "to sing an air extempore in harmony with a fixed theme". Thence "to enlarge, expatiate on a subject of talk".

212–5. Cf. (perhaps only a coincidence) *Twelfth Night*, III. 4. 96 ff.: "If all the devils in hell be drawn in little, and Legion himself possess'd him, yet I'll speak to him".

239. *Irish mantle*. Sampson refers to Spenser's *State of Ireland* (Globe ed.), 631, where Irenaeus (one of the speakers in the dialogue) says of this garment and the Irishman's use of it: "When it raineth it is his penthouse; when it bloweth it is his tabernacle. In Summer he can wear it loose, in winter he can wear it close; at all times he can use it; never heavy, never cumbersome". And after he has given a long catalogue of its further uses (which make it the clear duty of a paternal English government to prohibit it altogether), Eudoxus answers him: "Surely I think Diogenes' dish did never serve his master for more turnes, notwithstanding that he made it his dish, his cup, his cap, his measure, his waterpot, then (than) a mantle doth an Irish man".

253. *'fum'd*: perfumed.

256. *bed of snakes*: knots, intertwined masses of serpents (conspirators). Cf. *Pericles*, IV. 2. 157–9: "thunder shall not so awake the beds of eels, as my giving out her beauty stir up the lewdly-inclined". *N.E.D.* also quotes from a medical work of 1666: "This medicene

breaks the bed of Worms". H.D.S. cites Davenport, *City Nightcap*, III (Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, XIII. 148).

271. *wash the Ethiop white*. Cf. *Jeremiah* xiii. 23: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" The proverb is however also Greek—Αἰθίοπα σμήχειν, "to wash an Ethiop". Cf. R. Crashaw (on the baptism of the Ethiopian in *Acts* viii.):

> Let it no longer be a forlorne hope
> To wash an Aethiope:
> He's washt, his gloomy skin a peaceful shade
> For his white soul is made.

279. *Purge the disease with lawrell*: overshadow the discredit of the murder we have done by the fame it will win us.

Pliny says (VIII. 27) that doves, daws, blackbirds, and partridges purge themselves by eating laurel.

V. 4.

Outer stage, changing to whole stage at 58–9.

5. *dottr[el]s*: a kind of plover, "a lytell fonde byrde, for it helpeth in a maner to take it selfe". Its name is connected with the verb "to dote", and it was (falsely) supposed to be so intent on apeing whatever the fowler did, as not to notice the net. Hence, like "woodcock", "cuckoo", etc., the name was applied to stupid people. Cf. Fabian Fitzdottrel in Jonson's *The Devil is an Ass*.

James I is said to have loved to accompany the dottrel-catchers on the Gog Magog Hills near Cambridge.

8. *Tallants*: talons, perhaps with a pun on "talents". But *N.E.D.* gives no example of the *plural* in this sense so early.

18–9. Cf. *D.M.* v. 5. 73–4.

21. [*Anaxarchus*]: an emendation by H.D.S. for the *Anacharsis* of the Qq. Anaxarchus was a native of Abdera in Thrace and a philosopher of the school of his great townsman, Democritus. He accompanied Alexander on his conquests; and, having quarrelled with Nicocreon, tyrant of Cyprus, when one day Alexander asked him at a banquet what he thought of the dinner, the philosopher made the unphilosophically vindictive reply, that it was all very magnificent and only needed, in order to be quite perfect, a certain Satrap's head on a charger (*Diogenes Laertius*, IX. 10). Nicocreon fully realized who was meant; and, when after Alexander's death Anaxarchus was driven to land in Cyprus, had him seized and pounded to death in a mortar with iron pestles. The victim, however, won a glory which nothing in his life had earned, by the courage with which he faced death, scoffing at his tormentors to the last. When Nicocreon in irritation ordered his tongue to be cut out, Anaxarchus, like Hieronimo in *The Spanish Tragedy*, is said to have bitten it off with his own teeth

and spat it in the tyrant's face. Cf. Montaigne, II. 2. (This essay also mentions *Anacharsis*; which may have confused Webster.)

23–4. *Usurers . . . chullice.* A chullice or cullis is a strengthening broth, like beef-tea. Cf. *D.M.* II. 5. 92.

The pounding in a mortar and the gold are well illustrated by a passage in Cogan's *Haven of Health*, ch. 157, quoted by Nares, *s.v.* "cullis": "If you list to still (distil) a cocke for a weak body, that is in a consumption through long sicknesse or other causes, you may doe it well in this manner. Take a red cocke, that is not old, dresse him and cut him in quarters, and *bruse all the bones* . . . (a number of herbs, rose water, and white wine are then added) *and if you put in certaine peeces of gold, it will be the better, and they never the worse*". The whole was then simmered twelve hours and strained.

So in "Beaum. & Fl.", *The Nice Valour*, III. 1:

> he has beat me
> E'en to a cullis: I am nothing, right worshipful,
> But very pap and jelly.

For the medicinal use of gold, cf. Chaucer, *Prologue*, 443–4:

> For gold in phisik is a cordial,
> Therefore he lovede gold in special:

and R. B.'s story of Donne: "when Bishop *Morton* gave him a good quantity of Gold saying, *Here Mr.* Donne, *take this, Gold is restorative*: He presently answered, *Sir, I doubt I shall never restore it back again*: and I am assured that he never did".

26. *d[e]cimo sexto*: *i.e.* a book in which the page is one sixteenth of a full sheet—a common Elizabethan phrase for anyone diminutive.

Thus H.D.S. quotes Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, II. 1. 44: "looke where *Halfepenie, Sperantus* boy, commeth; though bound up *in decimo sexto* for carriage, yet a wit in *folio* for coosnage".

Cf. also Massinger, *Unnatural Combat*, III. 2; *Induction to Malcontent*, 75.

36. *Castle Angelo*: *i.e.* the Castle of St Angelo at Rome. Probably a vague reminiscence of the arrest of the real Vittoria (Hist. Introd. p. 76).

37. *the Tower yonder*, to an Elizabethan audience, doubtless meant the Tower of London.

41–2. *flaming firebrand*: with a play on his own name, Flamineo?

43. *smoore*: smother.

58. *travers*: a curtain or screen shutting off a recess. Here, and in *D.M.* IV. 1. 66–7, it refers to the well-known hangings dividing inner and outer stages. Chambers (*Eliz. Stage*, III. pp. 25–6, 111) justly points out that the name "traverse", so often treated as the specific term for these main hangings in modern works on the Elizabethan Theatre, has really very little authority. For in Eliza-

bethan usage the word seems often to denote merely a movable screen barring off a recess and not fixed hangings at all.

60 ff. The episode that follows is full of echoes of Shakespeare; some will feel, too full. It is dangerous to call up so clearly the ghosts of Ophelia and of Lear. There is indeed no model so perilous as Shakespeare; it is so hard to imitate him without seeming to copy. But we may grant that if it is to be done at all, it could scarcely be done better.

60. *rosemarie*: customary at weddings and funerals, either as a symbol of everlastingness, or because supposed to be good for the memory. Cf. Brand, *Pop. Antiq.* p. 451.

62. *dead and rotten*: recurs in the parallel scene in *Lear* (v. 3. 287) (Stoll).

62–4. *bayes . . . lightning*: an ancient superstition. Pliny (xv. 30) records that Tiberius used to wear a laurel-wreath in order to protect himself from lightning. On which Sir T. Browne (*Pseudodoxia*, II. 6) dryly remarks that his predecessor Augustus showed more sense in taking refuge under archways.

Is it possible that this pathetic safeguarding of one who is now past all need of it, was suggested by another play of Shakespeare which Webster has imitated elsewhere, *Cymbeline* with its dirge?

> Fear no more the lightning-flash,
> Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone.

64. *This sheet*: her winding-sheet.

67. It is perhaps meant to be typical of Zanche's malice that she at once draws Cornelia's attention to the hateful presence of Flamineo.

71 ff. A close imitation of Ophelia's madness (*Ham.* IV. 5. 174 ff.): "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember; and there is pansies, that's for thoughts. . . . There's fennel for you, and columbines; there's rue for you; and here's some for me".

72. *Hearts-ease*: Ophelia's "pansies" (*pensées*).

72. *make much of it*: with the implication, "for you will need it".

72–3. These two lines may recall the charming verse of Landor:

> There is a flower I wish to wear,
> But not until first worn by you—
> Heart's ease—of all on earth most rare—
> Bring it; and bring enough for two.

74. *grave-maker*: with a tragic irony. He has made but too many graves—Marcello's, and others as well.

76–7. *heere's a white hand . . . washt out*: cf. *Macbeth*, v. 1. 38–48.

79. *Cricket*. Cf. *D.M.* II. 2. 83; *Macbeth*, II. 2. 17:

> I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

So in Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology* (Eng. Transl.), IV. 1816: "when the cricket is heard, someone in the house will die; it sings him to the grave".

80. *yellow spots*: Brand, *Pop. Antiq.* p. 678, quotes J. Melton, *Astrologaster* (1620), p. 45: "to have yellow speckles on the nails of one's hand is a greate signe of death". Another writer of the time speaks of a "yellow death-mould" which may appear on the hand or any part of the body; but, as Brand suggests, this *may* be a mis-reading for "death-mole".

81. *Course*: corse.

83. *Couslep-water*...*memorie*: the nearest approach to this idea known to me is the statement of Gerard (*Herball*) in his chapter "Of Cowslips" that a decoction of primroses is a cure for "frensie".

83–4. Stoll compares *Lear*, IV. 6. 133–5: "Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination". But, apart from the "ounces", there is little real likeness.

86–8. Sampson compares *Othello*, IV. 3. 26 ff. as bearing an "obvious resemblance"; it does not seem at all obvious.

89. *the Robin-Red-brest and the wren*. The belief that the robin tends the dead is widespread, from Germany and Lorraine to Brittany and Britain (cf. The Babes in the Wood). Johnson's *Cornucopia* (1596) states that "the robin redbreast, if he find a man or woman dead, will cover his face with moss; and some think that if the body should remain unburied, he will cover the whole body". So Drayton, *The Owl* (1604):

> Covering with moss the dead, unclosed eye
> The little redbreast teacheth charity.

Cf. *Cymbeline*, IV. 2. 224 ff.; and Chapman's beautiful description in *Euthymiae Raptus* (1609) of the "murdered passenger":

> Whose face the bird hid that loves humans best,
> That hath the bugle eyes and rosy breast
> And is the yellow autumn's nightingale.

(See too Swainson, *Folklore of British Birds*, pp. 17–8: Brand, *Pop. Antiq.* pp. 686–7.)

The wren appears here as well because she is, in popular belief, the robin's wife.

> The robin redbreast and the wren
> Are God Almighty's cock and hen.

97–8. *wolfe*...*dig them up agen*. Again the suggestion of murder breaks through Cornelia's raving. For superstition believed that it was murdered bodies which were thus dug up. Cf. *D.M.* IV. 2. 332, on which Dyce quotes from *God's Revenge against Murther* (1670 ed.), VI. 27. 407, an account of a murdered body being dug up by a wolf "sent thither by God as a Minister of his sacred justice and revenge". The animal ate the other parts of the flesh, but left the face undisfigured so that identification should be easy.

106. *Blesse you all good people*. Cf. Ophelia's parting "God be wi' ye". Perhaps the curtain of the "study" was here drawn to again.

115. *mase*: bewilderment, dismay.

116. *trie*: experience. Cf. Lyly, *Euphues*, p. 84: "The quiet life which I have tryed, being a mayden".

117. Scan:

Wee *thinke* | cag'd birds | sing, | when *indeed* | they crie.

For the gnomic inverted commas, see on II. 1. 278–9; and for the idea cf. *Arcadia*, I. (*Wks.* I. 139):

> The house is made a very lothsome cage
> Wherein the bird doth never sing, but cry.

It is seldom that Webster borrows from the verse of the *Arcadia* (if he *is* borrowing here); but then it is natural enough that he should prefer to versify its prose.

Collier quotes Scott's:

> Who shall say the bird in cage
> Sings for joy and not for rage?

118 ff. Stage Direction. *coule*: cowl.

pot of lilly-flowers...scull: this recalls, if it was not suggested by, Boccaccio's story of the Pot of Basil (*Decam.* 4th Day, *Nov.* 5); which in its whole plot of the sister persecuted by her brothers for loving beneath her is not unlike *The Duchess of Malfi*.

118. *stand*: withstand. The word recalls, whether intentionally or no, IV. 2. 53.

136. *beyond melancholie*: more than mere hallucination.

V. 5.

Outer stage.

6. *quite*: quit, requite. Lodovico's word in I. 1. 7.

7. *To the meanest follower*: *i.e.* down to, including, the meanest follower.

15. *cariere*: charge at full speed ending in a sudden stop. See on IV. 3. 97.

V. 6.

Whole stage. There may have been properties set out in the "study" to suggest Vittoria's chamber. But clearly this scene involved the outer stage also; cf. 300: "*Remove* the bodies".

4. *blouze*: beggar's trull (to Zanche).

16. *Pattent to beg by*. A beggar who had not such a license, was liable to be arrested and whipped as a vagabond. Testimonials or licenses to beg might be given by Justices of the Peace to soldiers or mariners returning home, to the invalid, or by Vice-Chancellors of Universities to poor scholars. (The large sleeve of the M.A. gown was originally meant to hold the crusts thus begged.)

21. *case*: pair.

25. *at a dead lift*: a curious phrase originally applied to a horse pulling at a dead weight too heavy for it. Hence "in extreme difficulties", "in a tight corner". Cf. Shirley, *Maid's Revenge*, III. 2: "Hannibal's Medicine he carried always in the pommel of his sword, for a dead lift; a very active poison".

25–9. Copied by Shirley, *Gentleman of Venice*, v. 2 (*Cornari enters with pistol and rapier*):

> These are the jewels
> Which you must wear, sir, next your heart. How do you
> Affect the lustre of this toy? 'tis bright;
> But here's a thing will sparkle.

34 ff. Cf. the plot of Massinger's *Duke of Milan* (? acted 1620, publ. 1623), where the Duke actually does leave such a command to his favourite, Francisco (III. 3):

> And if I ne'er return, (so said great Sforza)
> No living man deserving to enjoy
> My best Marcelia, with the first news
> That I am dead (*for no man after me*
> *Must e'er enjoy her*) fail not to kill her.

The same play, it is just worth noting, has also a poisoning with a medicated picture.

49–50. See on III. 2. 142–3.

58. Cf. *D.M.* I. 1. 479.

59–61. Cf. *D.M.* I. 1. 299–300.

59–62. The point is the paradox that we pursue suicide as wantonly as other sins, though death is hateful to us, while the other sins are sweet and tempting.

61. *stibium*: antimony (a poison with symptoms like arsenic).

62. *carouse it off*: *carouse* being originally derived from the German *garaus trinken*, "to drink all off". It occurs first in the form "to drink carouse"; then "carouse" was taken to be, not an adverb, but a noun; which in its turn became a verb.

68. *Like Mandrakes shall rise shreeking*: for the mandrake and the superstition that it shrieked when pulled up see on III. 1. 54.

69. *grammaticall laments*: academic complaints, mere rhetoric.

For the whole passage, cf. Montaigne, III. 4: "When such like repetitions pinch me, and that I looke more nearely to them, I find them but grammaticall laments, the word and the tune wound me. Even as Preachers exclamations do often move their auditory more then their reasons". (C.)

72. *exclamation*: clamour.

77–8. Cf. Montaigne, II. 13: "To say truth it (the instrument of suicide) is a meate a man must swallow without chewing". (C.)

94. *taster*: continuing the metaphor of eating in ll. 77–8 above.

105. *cupping-glasses*: vessels for drawing blood, after a partial vacuum

had been created inside them by burning substances in them or otherwise. Cf. *D.M.* II. 5. 35.

108–13. Note the change to mocking, tripping prose. For Lucian's Purgatory see his *Menippos*. The following is Hickes's version (Oxford, 1634), p. 40: "I thinke it would move you to laugh much, if you saw those that were Kings and Princes amongst us, beg their bread there, sell salt fish, and teach the A.B.C. for sustenance, and how they are scorned and boxed about the eares as the basest slaves in the world. It was my fortune to have a sight of *Philip* King of *Macedon*, and I thought to have burst my heart with laughing: hee was shewed mee sitting in a little corner, cobbling old shoes to get somewhat towards his living: many other were to be seene there also, begging by the high waies side, such as *Xerxes*, *Darius*, and *Polycrates*". Sampson refers also to Rabelais, *Pantagruel*, ch. xxx; H.D.S. to *Love's Lab. Lost*, IV. 3. 166–9.

110. *tagging points*: fixing metal tags on the laces or points which largely did the work of buttons in Elizabethan dress.

136. *braches*: bitches.

144. *scotch holly-bread*: Holy Bread was in ordinary speech the name of the leavened bread blessed by the priest after the Eucharist and distributed to those of the congregation who had not communicated. Here however it clearly means the same as in the quotation given by Sampson from Cotgrave's *Dictionary* (1611): "*pain benist d' Escosse* —a sodden sheep's liver".

146–7. *stake*...*body*: the traditional treatment of suicides, who were thus buried at cross-roads. The custom only became illegal in 1823. Its source lies in the world-wide terror of the malevolent ghosts of evil-doers. Cf. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, IX. (The Scapegoat), pp. 15 ff.

150. *doubled*: eluded (met. of a hare doubling)—a sense not given in *N.E.D.* before 1812; though intransitively, in the sense "to act elusively", the word is common.

150. *reaches*: designs, as in Butler, *Hudibras*, III. 2. 1583:

> But Jesuits have deeper reaches.

There may be also a punning metaphor of navigating a tortuous river.

155 ff. Cf. *D.M.* I. 1. 336–8. Webster's lines *may* have partly suggested a passage in *Whimzies* [by R. Braithwaite] (1631—the year of the Second Quarto), where a jealous husband is described: "Meate for his *Funerall Pye* is shred, some few ceremoniall Teares on his Funerall Pile are shed; but the Wormes are scarce entered his shrowd, his Corpse Flowers not fully dead, till this yealous Earthworme is forgot, and another, more amorous, but lesse yealous, mounted his Bed".

158–9. Cf. *D.L.* II. 3. 105–7.

161. *Artillery yard.* Henry VIII had assigned the Fraternity of Artillery, to which he granted a charter, an exercise ground called Teazle Close, once the property of the dissolved Priory of St Mary Spital. Its site is still marked by Artillery Lane and Artillery St.,

Bishopsgate St. Without. Cf. Strype's *Stowe*, II. 96: "There is there a large close called Tasel Close...since letten to the cross-bow-makers, wherein they used to shoot for games at the popinjay; now the same being enclosed with a brick wall, serveth to be an Artillery Yard or Garden, whereunto the gunners of the Tower do weekly repair, namely every Thursday; and there, levelling certain brass pieces of great artillery against a butt of earth made for that purpose, they discharge them for their exercise".

Similarly Pepys records (April 20th 1669): "In the afternoon we walked to the Old Artillery-Ground near the Spitalfields, where I never was before, but now by Captain Deane's invitation did go to see his new gun tried, this being the place where the officers of the Ordnance do try all their great guns".

After the passing of the Spanish danger in 1588 the Artillery Company had fallen into decay; and when Webster wrote, it had just been revived under the King's patronage (1610), while Prince Charles himself entered its ranks. It is indeed from 1610 that the H.A.C. dates its present existence (see Wheatley, *London Past and Present*, I. 66). Sampson's assumption of a topical allusion to that revival here is quite probable, though we have to remember that testing of the Tower ordnance must always have gone on in the Artillery Ground, independently of the H.A.C.; so that the reference is not certainly to the latter.

164. *Hypermnestra*. The fifty daughters of Danaus, sought in marriage by their cousins the fifty sons of Aegyptus, and regarding such a union as incestuous, fled to Argos. And being there overtaken, at their father's bidding they slew their husbands on the bridal night—with the single exception of Hypermnestra, who, "*splendide mendax*" —"nobly false to her word"—spared her husband Lynceus. In punishment of their crime her forty-nine sisters had to spend the rest of eternity filling sieves in Hades: which has suggested to some that they were in origin water-nymphs associated with the scanty springs of the thirsty Argive Plain.

166. *horse-leeches*: blood-suckers.

167. *Here are two other Instruments*. No one has noted that Flamineo apparently makes no use of these loaded pistols to defend himself against Lodovico and Gasparo. Either they intercept him before he can use them; or there should be a stage-direction to the effect that he fires and misses.

170. *Maske*: the essential part of the original mask being the irruption of masked strangers, who invite those they visit to dance with them.

170. *matachine*: a sword-dance in fantastic costume—gilt helmet, cuirass, sword, buckler, streamers waving from shoulders, bells on legs. (Cf. the Pyrrhic dance.) The dancers were masked. Harington, *Metamorphosis of Ajax* (quoted in Chambers, *Eliz. Stage*, I. 371),

speaks of "an ill-favoured vizor, such as I have seen in stage plays, when they dance Machachinas".

Dyce quotes *The Prince of Priggs Revels* (1658), Sig. A 3:

> ——. What's this, a Masque?
> ——. A Matachin, you'l find it.

Whereupon masked men enter and bind the first speaker.

A further feature was that the dance represented a three-sided battle. Cf. *Arcadia*, I. (*Wks.* I. 109): "This was a fight that did imitate the matachin: for they being but three that fought, everie one had (two) adversaries". Similarly Capt. Jn Smith (*Virginia*, 177) speaks of "a tripartite peace of their Matachin warre".

This idea too *may* be in Flamineo's mind as he sees his duel with Vittoria interrupted by a third party hostile to both.

173. *Doe you know us now?* Cf. the narrative in *The Fugger News-Letters*, I. (ed. von Klarwill, Eng. trans., 1924), p. 88: "As Ludovico Orsini was about to murder her, she was at prayer, and when the murderer said to her: 'Do you recognize me?' she made answer 'Yea, now it is time to prepare my soul'".

178. Cf. Nash, *Lenten Stuffe* (1599) (Grosart, v. 263): "Fate is a spaniel that you cannot beate from you; the more you thinke to crosse it, the more you blesse it and further it". Similarly Lyly, *Euphues*, 109: "the kinde Spaniel, which the more he is beaten the fonder he is"; and *Mids. Night's Dream*, II. 1. 203.

181. Cf. *D.M.* III. 2. 91 (a passage imitated from the *Arcadia*).

184. *Bind him to the pillar*: no doubt one of the two columns supporting the "Heavens" above the Elizabethan public stage would be used for this: they were often serviceable as stage-properties, *e.g.* for Roderigo to hide behind in *Othello*, v. 1. See Chambers, *Eliz. Stage*, III. 75.

188. Vittoria clearly hopes, as Cleopatra with Octavian, to fascinate her vanquisher if she can but see him face to face. Just as in 210–4 she attempts it with Lodovico.

197–8. Cf. Montaigne, I. 40 (a conversation between a dying man and another): "'Recommend but your selfe to him (God),' said the other, 'and you shall quickly be there (in Heaven)': 'It is best then,' answered he, 'that my selfe carry mine owne commendations to him'". (C.)

202–3. Cf. *D.M.* IV. 2. 17.

212. Copied by Shirley, *Gent. of Venice*, III. 3:

> Thou hast
> Too good a face to be a mercenary
> Cut-throat.

216. *traine*: a regular word for a comet's tail. Cf. *Hamlet*, I. 1. 117: "stars with trains of fire". Here of course with a play on the sense—"train of servants".

223. Cf. *D.M.* IV. 2. 215, 220.

225. *Conceit*: in a double sense—(1) "imagination" or "morbid fancies" can never kill me. Cf. Peacham, *Compl. Gent.* XI. 101: "He found the affection of the Pope so estranged from him, that hereupon he took a conceit and died"; Lyly, *Sapho and Phao*, III. 3. 58: "for yet did I never heare of a woman that died of a conceite". (2) "Vanity".

230. *good for the falling sickneſſe*: cf. Pliny XXVIII. 4: "If their mouths bee rubbed with the said bloud (of a man or woman), who being overtaken with the epilepsie, are falne downe,. . .immediately thereupon they will rise and stand upon their feet. Some write, that if the great toes be pricked untill they bleed againe, the drops that come forth worke the like effect in the falling sicknesse, so that the face of the Patient be sprinkled or besmeared therewith".

236. *Fox*: sword. Common in Elizabethan English, whether because the steel was brown (Nares); or because the figure of a wolf on some blades was taken for a fox (*N.E.D.*).

239. *tent*: probe.

241–7. A good instance of the Elizabethan way of putting into a character's mouth what the author feels and means his audience to feel about another character. (Cf. L. S. Schücking, *Character-Problems in Shakespeare's Plays.*)

248–9. Shirley copies this in *The Brothers*, IV. 1:

> My heart is in a storm and the day grows black;
> There's not a star in Heaven will lend a beam
> To light me to my ruin. Felisarda!
> That name is both my haven and my shipwreck.

And again, as T. S. Eliot has pointed out, in *The Cardinal*, V. 3:

> The mist is risen and there's none
> To steer my wandering bark. (*Dies.*)

H.D.S. quotes also N. Richards, *The Celestial Publican* (1630), sig. C 1 *verso*:

> Then, like a mast-lesse Barke in stormy weather,
> The soule drives up and down, it knows not whether.

253. *thou*: Zanche.

254. *thou*: Vittoria.

254. *neare the bottome*. Cf. *D.M.* V. 5. 89.

256–8. Cf. the savage independence of Bosola, *D.M.* V. 4. 94–5.

260. *in a mist*. Cf. *D.M.* V. 5. 118.

263–4. Cf. N. Richards, *Messalina* (ed. A. R. Skemp), 2410–1:

> Like a spent Taper onely for a flash
> I doe recover to embrace thee, sweet.

Also *The Celestial Publican*, sig. C 2. (H.D.S.)

266. *Lyons ith Tower*. Henry I kept lions and leopards in the Tower of London; and three leopards were sent by the Emperor to Henry III

(three leopards being then the English royal coat of arms); after which those "lions" and others (says Stowe) were kept in the Lion Tower. We find Edward II ordering the sheriffs of London to pay the keeper of his leopard in the Tower 6*d. per diem* for the beast's food, and 1½*d.* for the man's. Periodically the lions were baited (*e.g.* June 23rd 1609; April 20th 1610) to amuse noble audiences. See the amazing account in Stowe's *Annals* (1615 ed. pp. 894–5); also Addison's *Freeholder*, No. 47 for an amusing superstition about them. The animals were removed to the Zoo in 1834. (Cf. Wheatley, *London Past and Present*, III. 397.)

266. *Candlemas day*: Feb. 2nd. A French Almanac from Bâle (1672) has the rhyme:

> Selon les Anciens on dit:
> Si le soleil clairement luit
> A la Chandeleur, vous verrez
> Qu'encore un Hyver vous aurez.

Cf. Sir T. Browne, *Pseudodoxia*, VI. 4: "So is there a general tradition in most parts of Europe, that inferreth the coldness of succeeding winter from the shining of the sun on *Candlemas* Day, or the Purification of the Virgin *Mary*, according to the proverbial distich

> Si Sol splendescat Mariâ purificante,
> Major erit glacies post festum quam fuit ante".

This is curiously forgotten while St Swithin is still remembered.

274. *where all seeke paine by paine*: *i.e.* whereas. Cf. *D.L.* II. 4. 23. And for the spirit of this epitaph of the weary end of the Renaissance, cf. *D.M.* II. 5. 77–9.

296–9. There could be no clearer expression than this of the attitude of the Italian Renaissance villain, like Iago, towards "Murder as a Fine Art".

301. *What use you ought make.* Cf. the close of the first scene in the play—I. 1. 60. Similarly *D.M.* V. 5. 135, *D.L.* V. 5. 99, *A.V.* V. 2. 61.

EPILOGUE

3. *Hæc fuerint . . . placui.* Martial II. 91. 8. As usual Webster obscures the point of his Martial. That poet at the close of his second book asks the Emperor Domitian to grant him the political privileges reserved to parents of at least three children. "Let me," he says, "have this as a consolation, if my work has displeased: *let me have this reward, if my work has given pleasure.*" But what can the words mean as here applied by Webster? It looks as if, not knowing the original sense and context, he had taken the words to mean: "If I have given pleasure, let *that in itself* be my reward".

6–7. An ideal of restraint in acting that shows Webster, for all his melodrama, to have been of the same opinion as Hamlet in his advice to the players. Cf. too *Char.* "An Excellent Actor": "He doth not strive to make nature monstrous".

9. *Perkins*: a famous player. He belonged to Worcester's (later Queen Anne's) Men from 1602, or earlier, to 1619; then to the King's Men; then to Queen Henrietta's. He played Sir John Belfare in Shirley's *Wedding* (1626), Fitzwater in Davenport's *K. John and Matilda* (*c.* 1629), Capt. Goodlack in Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West* (1630), Barabas in the *Jew of Malta* (1633), Hanno in Nabbes's *Hannibal and Scipio* (1635). Wright (*Hist. Histrionica*) says he died and was buried in Clerkenwell under the Commonwealth. Verses by him are prefixed to Heywood's *Apology for Actors*; and his portrait at Dulwich is reproduced in Sampson.

10–1. Cf. the last line of *D.M.* An adaptation of the Latin tag *finis coronat opus* (which I have found several times in letters of the period).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO TEXTUAL NOTES

"Conjectural criticism demands more than humanity possesses, and he that exercises it with most praise has very frequent need of indulgence." JOHNSON.

The text of each piece has been printed direct from rotographs of the original editions, with a minimum of alteration. Apart from *s* for *ſ* and modernization of the use of *u* and *v*, *i* and *j*, and of the contraction ~ for *m* or *n*, the old spelling has been kept. Similarly the punctuation is changed as little as possible compatibly with clearness. The theory of the Elizabethan system was simple and excellent. It was not addressed like ours to the mind, but to the voice; it was a matter, not of logic, but of elocution; it marked not clauses, but pauses. Hence full stops occur sometimes in the middle of sentences; commas, very often, at the end of them. But the practice of the Elizabethans was less admirable than their theory. They were careless: and it has proved too easy for fanciful editors to read a world of significance into the slips of sleepy compositors. The only safe principle is to alter the old stopping as little as possible, provided that the reader is not bothered with ambiguities. But it sometimes becomes necessary here to insert a comma, there to replace one by a dash (the few dashes of the original Quartos are distinguished by being printed, as in the original Quartos, twice the length of modern ones); or, very occasionally, to replace a semicolon, colon, or full stop by three dots. The capitals of the original text are simpler to deal with; they are sometimes significant, sometimes haphazard; but it does no harm to leave them absolutely as they stand. This compromise may invite criticism: but I see no reason whatever to sacrifice to some gentleman preparing a thesis on Elizabethan punctuation the nine hundred and ninety-nine ordinary readers who want an intelligible text. After all, a rotograph facsimile of an Elizabethan play costs only thirty shillings: and every University Library should possess a selection of them.

All alterations or additions of words or letters in the text are marked by square brackets, omissions by the sign ∧ . A few frequently recurring old spellings have been changed, wherever they are confusing, without the alterations being explained each time in the Textual Notes—thus "of" has been modernized to "of[f]", where that is the meaning; "to" to "to[o]" and *vice versa*; "ere" to "[e'er]" and *vice versa*; "their" to "[there]" and *vice versa*; and "president" to "pre[ce]dent". Similarly the corrections of the most obvious printer's slips, such as turned "u"'s, are bracketed in the text, but not recorded in these notes as well.

For *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* I have used Sampson's collation of the later Quartos, checking all the variants he gives by the originals. Where different Quartos support the same reading, it has not been thought necessary to record mere variations in their spelling. Similarly, throughout *all* the plays, in quoting the readings of modernized editions like Dyce and Hazlitt, I have not repeated the words under discussion in their modernized form: that would have made the notes both bulkier and much less clear. The reader has simply to bear in mind that all modern editions of Webster's works or of any part of them, except Sampson's *White Devil and Duchess of Malfi*, have been in modern spelling.

The Textual Notes of greatest interest are starred.

TEXTUAL NOTES

THE WHITE DEVIL

For details of editions see Bibliography. In the notes that follow

A = the Quarto of 1612. (Garrick's copy: now Brit. Mus. C. 34. e. 18.)
A_1 = Dyce's copy of the same Quarto. (No. 10,491: 26. Box 47. 2. in the Dyce Collection at South Kensington.)
B = the Quarto of 1631.
C = the Quarto of 1665.
D = the Quarto of 1672.
Qq = the consensus of ABCD.

The Second Quarto was clearly printed from the First, the Third from the Second, and the Fourth from the Third. Indeed the Second and Third are page-for-page reprints. A certain amount of conjectural emendation is done in these later Quartos; D had the most intelligent editor, B the stupidest; but B, C, and D are all capable of a sheep-like reproduction of nonsense[1]. The basis of any modern text must clearly be A; for the variations of BCD are all either misprints or conjectural emendations of no more authority than those of any modern editor[2]. There is accordingly no point in recording them wholesale; and they are here given only when they possess some interest.

The variations between different copies of the First Quarto are of more importance. Dyce made a useful collation of them; but neither he, nor Sampson who used his collation, tried to explain how these variations worked. And yet when two copies of the First Quarto disagree, it is obviously important to know which of them has more authority.

This is at first sight a perplexing question. For his edition Dyce used both his own copy, now at South Kensington (A_1), and Garrick's copy (A), the variants of which he noted in the margin of his own. Now neither A nor A_1 proves to be consistently superior; sometimes one is obviously right, sometimes the other, sometimes it is extremely hard to choose between them. Indeed the variants are in some cases clearly alternative versions of Webster's.

The reason is this. Nicholas Okes, having introduced these corrections when half his sheets were already printed, was not going to waste the un-

[1] *E.g.* at III. 3. 104, for A's *crabbed*, BCD all print the nonsense-word *sabby*.

[2] To save others from the perplexity it at first caused me, I should point out that Sampson's *apparatus criticus* is slightly misleading, both in this play and *D.M.* It *appears* to give a complete collation: and, that being so, to suggest the important conclusion that Quartos C and D of *W.D.*, and C of *D.M.*, were *not* based entirely on the Quarto immediately preceding them in each case. Thus on *W.D.* II. 1. 185 "hundreth", Sampson's note is "B, hundred" (whereas according to his usual practice it should be "BCD, hundred"): and this suggests that CD there agree with A and read "hundreth". Similarly a few lines lower—"O Saint Anthony fire": here Sampson comments "BC, Anthonies", as if D read "Anthony" like A. Now, if that were so, we could hardly explain the restoration as a conjecture. And if C and D proved to have other sources than B and C respectively, of course their authority might be considerably increased. In fact, however, D reads simply "Anthony's"; and a detailed examination of all these apparent instances of collation in the later Quartos shows that they never agree with A against their immediate predecessors, except in cases which can be simply explained as conjectural emendations.

corrected ones. It was indeed quite common for Elizabethan printers to make changes like this half-way through. On the other hand, to even things out for the public, he did not bind up individual copies entirely from corrected, or entirely from uncorrected, sheets. He mixed them. And accordingly none of the five copies of the First Quarto I have examined is a safe guide *throughout*: we have to judge each signature separately. Obvious misprints show which is the earlier, uncorrected form; and only then can we decide between those other variants where there seems little to choose and where previous editors simply followed their own taste. These variants are not very numerous; but there are half a dozen passages where we can now feel fairly sure of Webster's final intention.

Let a_1, b_1, c_1, etc., represent the first, uncorrected form of signatures A, B, C, etc.; a_2, b_2, c_2, etc., the corrected sheets. The text of the play covers sigs. B to M2 *verso*. The variations noted by Dyce occur in sigs. B, D, F, G, H, K. And the copies I have examined are made up of corrected and uncorrected signatures as follows (K remains doubtful):

A (Brit. Mus. C. 34. e. 18): b_2, d_2, f_1, g_1, h_2, ?k_2.
Brit. Mus. 840. c. 37: b_1, d_2, f_1, g_2, h_1, ?k_1.
A_1 (Dyce Collection 10,491—No. 2 copy): b_1, d_1, f_2, g_2, h_1, ?k_1.
Dyce Coll. 10,491—No. 1 copy (20 L. 61): b_1, d_2, f_2, g_2, h_1, ?k_1.
Forster Collection 9334 (also at S. Kensington): b_1, d_1, f_1, g_2, h_1, ?k_1.

The copy of the First Quarto used for the Second Quarto[1] must have consisted of b_2, d_2, f_2, g_2, h_2, ?k_1.

It follows that our best guide is A, except for sigs. F and G, where we must follow A_1: and in sig. G (III. 3. 133–IV. 2. 148) there are some variants of importance between which we can now decide (see Text. Notes on I. 1. 45; II. 1. 305; IV. 1. 46; IV. 2. 51, 86; IV. 3. 67; V. 3. 241).

TO THE READER

*4. *blacke*] ? *blank* Steevens: *bleak* Malone (which is supported by *A.Y.L.* I. 1. 32–3: "Some bleak Banquetting-house I'th dead of Winter"); this is quite probably right, though not certain enough to justify disturbing the text.

19. *life'n*] *enliven* CD: *liven* Dyce. *Lifen* is a perfectly correct old form, whereas *liven* appears to be more modern and colloquial: see *N.E.D.*

The Persons. There is no list in AB: that given in the text is found in CD. The bracketed names have been added by the editor.

After "The Persons" C adds:

IN MENTEM AUTHORIS
Scire velis quid sit mulier? quo percitet œstro?
En tibi, si sapias, cum sale, mille sales. *J. W.*

D places this couplet *before* "The Persons", with the full signature "J. Wilson"—doubtless the playwright of that name (1617?–1696), author of a tragedy, a tragi-comedy, and two prose comedies (collected by Maidment and Logan, 1874).

[1] Unless of course more than one was used; which seems rather unlikely.

The meaning is obscure, the point obscurer. One might suggest:

> Would'st thou fain know what woman is,
> What madness woman brings?
> Thou'lt find, if wise, both wit in this
> And a thousand witty things.

It seems however simpler to read "*si sapias cum sale*", omitting the comma (which may be merely metrical), with the sense: "Here are a thousand witty things, should you have the wit to see them".

I. 1.

[Act I. Scene 1.]] Neither Acts nor Scenes in AB: some Act divisions in C: Acts and Scenes in D.

1. *Banisht!*] *Banisht?* Qq. But the mark of interrogation is frequently used in Elizabethan printing where we should have a mark of exclamation. The latter is far more dramatic here, though Greg supposes a question addressed to Antonelli and Gasparo.

3–4. As prose in AB, owing to large initial B of *Banisht*.

19. *you* BCD: *you, you* A.

45. *such* Qq: *sweet* A_1. For sig. B (I. 1. 1–I. 2. 213), A_1 is clearly the earlier, uncorrected form: thus in I. 2. 14 it misprints *Zawche* for *Zanche*, in I. 2. 22 *sotiety* for *satiety*.

46. *the*[*y*] BCD: *the* A.

54. *growne*] ? *growe* Sampson.

60. [*Sennet*] Dyce: *Senate* Qq, perhaps a mere variant spelling—Dekker has "sennate" (*Satiromastix*, III. 4). Dyce moves this S.D. to the beginning of Scene II; like several others in the play it may indeed be premature and due to A having been set up from a prompt-copy. But the change is needless, if the play is thought of as performed continuously with no more break between Scenes 1 and 2 than the drawing of a curtain. For then the trumpets may quite well be heard at this point.

*61. *sell sheep thus, to be cut*] Qq Hazlitt Sampson place the comma before *thus*: Dyce omits it. But Lodovico's complaint is that he has been *sold* like a sheep, not cut up like one; *i.e.* after being shorn first; *thus* belongs, then, to *sell*.

I. 2.

22. [*whereas*] Dyce: *where a* Qq. The correction is confirmed by the original passage in Florio's Montaigne: see Commentary.

47. *find it*] *find him* D.

48. *How...brother!*] begins 49 in Qq.

49. *What, travailing*] I have added the comma for clearness.

52–3. One line in Qq.

58–9. One line in Qq.

66. *cheeke*] ? *chique* or *check* Sampson.

67. Ends with *mistris* in Qq.

69. *you*[*r*] CD: *you* AB.

76. *boy* ABC: *bu'y* D: *b' wi'* Dyce (needlessly).

83. *Leon*] *leam* Steevens: *lyam* Dyce (the most usual form—O.Fr. *liem*); there are many variants, however,—"liam", "lyonne", etc.—so that *Leon* may perhaps be left, though it is not found elsewhere. *N.E.D.* recognizes it as a variant on the strength of this passage. Cf. Fr. *lien*. In any case

Leon is more likely to be a corruption of *Leam* or *Liam* than of *Lyam*. To *Leam* there is however the objection that it was probably a mono-syllable.

*91. *entertaynment:*] ?*entertaynment?*, *i.e.* as an ironic question.

121–55. Like Sampson, I have followed the example of a MS. hand in A in bracketing the asides; otherwise the passage becomes very perplexing to read. This bracketing in A has a few omissions; but there can be no real doubt where brackets should go.

138–9. *coverd...yon* AC: *coverd...you* BD: *cover...your* A_1. See on 1. 1. 45.

141–2. *thou...Lord*] wrongly bracketed by Sampson as an aside. Camillo's comment shows that he hears; *my Lord* is, of course, meant to be ambiguous.

144. *I...hard*] wrongly bracketed by Sampson, as if an aside addressed, like all the others, to Vittoria. It is, of course, addressed to Camillo.

155. *brees*] [*the*] *breese* Dyce (through failing to see the word was in the plural).

178. *say*] Daniel suggests *so*.

183. *ma*[*r*]*ke* D: *make* ABC (which Brereton defends as a nautical metaphor—as of "making a harbour"!). The correction is easy and essential.

187. *Enter Brachiano* ABC: D marks here Act. 1. Scen. 3 and places Brachiano's entrance, like Dyce and Sampson, after *my Lord, my Lord!* It is however quite effective that Brachiano should enter and stand watching Vittoria in silence during these few lines of Flamineo's speech.

*189. *civilitie* A: *cruelty* BCD, which Crawford prefers on the unconvincing ground that Montaigne adds, after the passage about women's restraint quoted in the Commentary, "They must have the reynes given them a little". But the reading of A makes perfect sense: and it is much more like Flamineo's cynicism to say to a woman that decency demands women's confinement, than that cruelty inflicts it. Besides where is the "cruelty" in chaining up a vicious dog?

197. [*listening*]] added by MS. hand in A.

197–8. In Qq these lines end with *eternallie* | *hart-hole*.

201. In Qq ends with *credit*.

209. *or lead* A: BCD Dyce Sampson omit *or*. It should be kept: its omission was probably due to haplography with the *-on* of *iron*, or to a mistaken desire to smooth the metre. Scan:

Where *they* | have tyr | annised, iron, | or lead, | or stone.

216. [*Here*] *sir?*] *Heare sir*. A (ambiguous spelling): similarly at 261.

246–7. Metrically one line, and so printed by Dyce and Sampson. But the Qq arrangement has a certain point in giving Flamineo's utterance, by the extra pause, a certain deliberation in its devilry, as he licks his lips over his sister's cunning.

265. [*with*] CD: AB omit (it is added by MS. hand in A, but after *all*: so Sampson).

267. [*then*] CD: AB omit; *than* is added by MS. hand in A. The omission was probably due to haplography with *ra-ther*.

272. [*leave*] D: *leaves* ABC. This might easily be right if it stood alone: but preceded by *keepe* it is very awkward.

*290. *mens...*] *mens*. Qq Sampson: *men's*— Dyce. Sampson defends the Qq reading on the ground that *eyes* can be supplied from *teares* in the previous line; comparing *D.M.* 1. 1. 515: "You have left me heartlesse—*mine* is in your bosome"; and *D.M.* v. 5. 79–80: "as the tooth-ache (is

taken away) with the sight of a Barbor, that comes to pull *it* out". But it is one thing to supply *heart* or *tooth* where *heartlesse* and *tooth-ache* have preceded; and quite another to invent *eyes* from *teares*. If anything were supplied it would have to be *lives* from *life* in the preceding line. Dyce's aposiopesis seems the simplest solution. I was at one time inclined to insert *eyes*, supposing haplography owing to *Fye, fye* following: this would be even likelier to occur if Webster wrote Brachiano's words on a new line, so that the second *fye* came directly under *eyes*. The addition would also ease the metre: but that consideration cannot be stressed in Webster; and the text had better stand.

293. [*his*] BCD: *this* A.

II. 1.

3. [*such a*] BCD: *a such* A. *N.E.D.* has no instance of *a such* (cf. Germ. *ein solcher*) after 1307.

8. *My Lord, the Duke* BCD: A omits comma. (Not necessarily an error, on Elizabethan principles of punctuation: but misleading to the reader, who is tempted to read "my Lord the Duke" as a single phrase.)

10. In Qq ends with *mildely*.

20–1. [*Exeunt... Jaques.*]] Dyce and Sampson place *Void the chamber* before *Enter Brachiano*, etc. and follow it by the direction *Exeunt Isabella, Giovanni and Jaques*. This involves more alteration than the present arrangement, and keeps Marcello and Flamineo hanging about the stage through an intimate family quarrel; *Void the chamber* as placed in Qq has much more the air of ordering a *general* clearance (*Be gone* having been addressed to Isabella alone). Cf. Holland's Livy, VII. p. 252: "the roume being voided and all commaunded to depart".

26. *Church—you*] ABC Sampson have no stop: D, a comma: Dyce, a colon. There are difficulties either way: but *you may proceed* seems better as a curt phrase by itself.

28. *you* [*that*] *have*] *you have* A Sampson: *you having* BCD Dyce. Sampson's reading is bad grammar and bad metre; Dyce's involves either altering *have* in l. 30 also to *having*, or omitting it altogether (as he does). It seems more likely to suppose *that* to have dropped out through confusion with *That* at the beginning of the line. Cf. *D.L.* III. 2. 102 and Text. Note; *C.C.* I. 2. 169.

41. *Scepter* A: *Scepters* BCD Dyce Sampson. But, after the *one pearle, Scepter* may stand naturally enough.

42. *loose*] *lose* Dyce. By the spelling it might be either. But one does not "lose" a thing to ruin: one "lets it go" to ruin.

56. *Lord* Qq Dyce Brereton: *the Lord* MS. hand in A: so Sampson (needlessly).

**81. *Your new-plow'd* [*fore-head. Defiance!—and*] *I'le meete thee*] *new plow'd fore-head defiance, and I'le meete thee* Qq Sampson: *forehead-defiance* Dyce (who queries *plum'd* for *plow'd*).

It is clear that the *new-plow'd forehead* is simply Francisco's furrowed scowl. But it is ridiculous to talk of showing a *forehead-defiance* to *slaves or men condemn'd*; while, in the Qq, *and I'le meete thee* has no connection with the preceding words to justify its *and*. I have therefore punctuated as above.

For *new-plow'd forehead* as a phrase in itself cf. *Char.* "Intruder into

favour", 4–6: "thinkes the best part of gravity to consist in a *ruffled forehead*". Note that the passage goes on "Hee is the most *slavishly* submisse etc."—cf. *slaves* here.

85. Ends with *baite a* in AB: with *Lion* in C: with *thus* in D. MS. hand in A corrects.

93. (*'Bout...meane*): the bracket is added by MS. hand in A.

94–5. One line in A.

112. *to* [*a*] *souldier* BCD Dyce Sampson: *to souldier* A. *A* is several times omitted in the course of the play by A: and *N.E.D.* has only one instance of the verb "to soldier" as early as the seventeenth century, and that in the form "to soldier *it*".

144. *Camillo* ABC Dyce: *Isabella* D Sampson. *Camillo* is quite clearly right. Francisco wishes to discuss with him his commission against the pirates (cf. the next line): and accordingly at 280 Camillo duly arrives and his commission against the pirates is discussed.

144–5. [*Exit Serv.*] Sampson: *Exit Marcello.* Dyce. It is a small point who fetches Camillo. If Francisco, Monticelso, and Brachiano are to be thought of as alone on the stage during the quarrel, whoever goes out with this message must be supposed to have entered with Giovanni at 97.

The simplest device of all would be, however, to make Francisco shout this order, to call Camillo, through the door to some servant supposed waiting outside.

149–50. *Exeunt Fr.* etc.] placed opposite 148–9 in ABC, clearly for typographical reasons of space.

151. *So!—I*] *So I* ABC Sampson: *So, I* D: *So. I* Dyce. There can be no doubt that D and Dyce are right, considering Webster's quite German fondness for "So" as an interjection.

159. *two* A: *these two* MS. hand in A: *now two* CD Dyce (unjustified attempts to botch the metre).

170. [*with*]*ered*] *whithered* A.

178. *haunted* ABC Sampson: *hunted* D Dyce. *Haunted out* is slightly supported by Orrery, *Herod the Great*, III.: "My ghost shall haunt thee out in every place".

227–8. *Enter Francisco*, etc.] Qq add *Camillo*, whose entrance comes later. D marks Act 2. Scen. 2.

228. *course. My*] D has semicolon: no stop in ABC.

231. *given*] MS. hand in A adds *me*.

232. Ends with a full stop in A (which omits question-marks wholesale), with a question-mark in BCD: Dyce corrects. The change, though not imperative, seems preferable: without it 233 becomes a little awkward.

236. *No though*] ?? *not though* (the final *t* being lost in the initial *t* of *though*).

243. *with*] *and* is inserted before this by MS. hand in A (for metrical reasons, but not justified).

245. *or*] erased by MS. hand in A (a similar case to the preceding).

265. *my*] Sampson queries *thy*: but cf. l. 206, which Isabella is repeating.

265. [*repostum*] BCD: *repositum* A.

280. *Enter Camillo*] Dyce, for consistency with his alteration in 144–5, has to make Marcello also re-enter here.

282. Here Sampson marches Francisco, Monticelso, Camillo, and Marcello off the stage, so that he has to march them on again at 318 (where D does indeed support him with a stage-direction for the entrance of the first three): but it is clear that they merely withdraw to the back of the stage (cf. Flamineo's "Do you marke their whispering?").

288. *About the murder.* Dyce and Sampson destroy the whole effect of Brachiano's cold peremptoriness by adding a question-mark.
290. *her[e]'s* CD: *her's* AB.
297. *cornet*] Sampson suggests *coney*. See Commentary.
305–6. *lothsome*] *lethan* A_1. For sig. D (II. 1. 160–II. 2. 2nd Dumbe Shew, 9) A_1 is inferior. Cf. on 310; similarly in 308 it prints *the* for *thee*; and in II. 2. Dumbe Shew, 6, besides other slight differences, *lighs* for *with lights*.
309–11. In Qq two lines, ending with *us* | *Camillo*?
310. *Doc. Sir I shall.*] A_1 omits.
318. *another['s]* CD: *another* AB.
318. *Exeunt.* D adds *Ent. Monc. Cam. Fra.*
359. *these* A: *those* BCD (perhaps rightly).
368. *my Lord,*] *my Lord!* Dyce: *my Lord?* Sampson (quite needlessly).
369–70. [*Exeunt Camillo and Marcello.*] Dyce: *Exit* Qq.

II. 2.

(D, Actus Tertius. Scena Prima.)

3. *murder[s]*] *murder* Qq Sampson.
Dumbe Shew, 7. *Guid-antonio*] *Gasparo, Antonelli* Sampson (who supposes the MS. to have read *Gasp. Anton.*). But this is not a probable corruption; and strange dumb characters appear too often in Webster's plays (cf. Christophero, Jaques the Moor, Farnese, Forobosco) to justify changing the text.
35. *fa[t]e* D: *face* ABC.
36. *louder musicke from*] edd. silently and I think needlessly alter to *louder, musicke, from.*
Second Dumbe Shew, 5. *complement* A: *they complement* BCD.
Second Dumbe Shew, 9. [*shewe*]] *shewes* Qq.
Second Dumbe Shew, 10–12. *comes forth...wonder[s]...commands...apprehends...go[es]* C: AB have *wonder, go*: D Dyce put all the other verbs also in the plural. This is simpler and we certainly have "*they* are come ...to apprehend" in l. 48: on the other hand it is easier to imagine the *s* of *commands* and the *es* of *goes* (before *as*) being dropped, than the *s* being corruptly added to the other three verbs. The singular may be due to the Duke being thought of as the one who really acts and commands.
46. [*Brac.*]] *Mar.* A.
51. *friend.* A: BCD Dyce Sampson have a comma. Either is possible.

III. 1.

(D, Scen. 2.)

9–10. One line in Qq.
36. *made* A Sampson: *am* BCD Dyce; *made* is both better sense and has a certain point as echoing Marcello's *made* a line before.
41. *got*] *got?* Qq, with a comma after *handfull*, so that 42 becomes Flamineo's answer to his own question. This *may* be right.
**53. *physicke [on)]*] *physicke: Or* A, followed by all subsequent editions (with later a comma for the colon). Yet to say that all oaks have generally mandrakes by them is merely a ridiculous untruth. Mandrakes are far from common. Besides this ruins the contrast between the sacred mistletoe and the noxious mandrake that accompanies it—the argument being that

there is always a fly in the ointment of ambition. So that, considering the existence elsewhere (see Commentary) of a definite superstition associating mandrakes with *mistletoe-bearing* oaks, the conjecture *on* for *Or* seems to me fairly safe.

54. *gaine.*] The full stop should perhaps be omitted.

65–6. One line in Qq.

III. 2.

(No new scene in D.)

S.D. [*Zanche,*] ABC read *Isabella* (who of course is dead). Greg ingeniously suggests that the same actor played Isabella and Zanche; whence the confusion. Zanche's presence is supported by the reading of ABC in 9—*gentlewomen*; and, more clearly, by the pronouncement of sentence on her at 274.

9. *gentlewom[a]n* D: *gentlewomen* ABC. This may be right (see previous note): the Lawyer however uses the singular in his next speech.

11. [*Law.*]] A omits.

53. [*Exit Lawyer.*] Sampson; probably rightly, though he may merely withdraw to the back of the Court.

*62. *In her effected*] CD omit. *Effected* seems very unsatisfactory. I should suggest as possibilities (1) *In her affections* (= "passions"), or (2) *In her infected*, or (3), much less probably, *In her offences*.

For (1) cf. Milton, *Sovereign Salve* (1643), 25: "A will overruled by enormous affections or passions"; *Romans* i. 26: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections".

For (2) it is enough to compare the "Infected minds" of *Macbeth*, v. 1. 79 and Sidney, *Apology for Poetry*: "Our erected wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected will keepeth us from reaching unto it".

Palaeographically (2) is of course easier than (1). The substitution of one prefix for another occurs *passim*: *e.g.* Kellner (*Restoring Shakespeare*, p. 148) instances *Lear*, v. 1. 66: *extends* Q_2: *intends* other texts; iv. 7. 32: *expos'd* Qq: *oppos'd* F.

The change from *-fections* to *-fected* is of course slightly more difficult, though *n* was always liable to be dropped through being written contracted as a dash over the preceding letter. Cf. (Kellner, p. 123) *Tit. Andron.* i. 1. 242: *Pathan* F_1; *Pantheon* F_2 (rightly). There not only has the *n* been dropped, but the *eo* has coalesced to *a* as here, supposedly, the *io* of *affections* to *e*. Cf. too (Kellner, p. 139) *Othello*, ii. 3. 4, an exact parallel to this, where Q misprints *directed* for *direction*.

I feel that *In her* is really leading up to a noun, that *affections* makes an easier sentence than *infected* and a more pointed one than *offences*, and that it is therefore on the whole the likeliest of the three.

70–1. Three lines in Qq, ending *ashes* | *doo't* | *resolved*.

78–80. The punctuation has caused trouble. *Court...surfets...holy.* A: *Court...surfeits?...holy.* Dyce: *Court?...surfets,...holy.* Sampson. Both Dyce and Sampson thus leave *how* in 75 without any construction.

99. *empt[i]ed* BCD: *empted* A.

103. *guilty* A: *gilt* BCD.

104. *bring[s]* BCD: *bring* A.

112–3. There has again been trouble with the punctuation—*what Whore*

is next the devell; *Adultry, Enters*, etc. A: *a Whore is next the Devil*; *Adultery Enters, the Devil and Murder*. D (in a wild attempt to emend).

114. *Husband*'] ends 113 in Qq.

*139. *Perseus*'] for the needless attempts to emend this, see Commentary.

*140. *vertue—To the point!*'] *vertue to the point.* Qq Sampson. Dyce puts a full stop after *vertue*, with the same sense as the present ed. The Qq stopping *can* be given a meaning (see Commentary): but it is much less dramatic. Cf. too *D.L.* IV. 2. 126 (in a similar court-scene): "I come to th' poynt"; *A.V.* IV. 1. 213: "go to the point". Also *D.L.* IV. 2. 163, 370.

146. [*ones*] BCD: *on's* A.

186. *laces*[*s*]*it* BCD: *lacescit* A.

201. [*he*] CD: *her* AB.

211. *mee?* D: A ends the line with a comma (BC no stop): which is possible, supposing we take *Condemne you me* to mean *If you condemn me.*

217. [*a*] Dyce Sampson: Qq omit. Cf. II. 1. 112.

221. *you your*'] Sampson suggests omitting *you*, perhaps rightly.

227. *You...me*'] Sampson moves to end 226, thus making a not very probable alexandrine.

**237–8. *as* [*long*] *As*: *as loving As* Qq and prev. edd.: *as loving, And* Deighton. The *as...As* was a serious difficulty, though ignored by editors. I first suspected a lacuna; with the alternative of taking *as loving* = "as lovingly curious as possible" (cf. *C.C.* II. 3. 15). But all doubts are dispelled by the parallel passage in *Sejanus*, a play which Webster imitates elsewhere too (see Commentary). The expression here is certainly awkward: but that is doubtless the reason why *long* was corrupted to *loving*.

251. *curtaine—now*'] *curtaine now* ABC Sampson: *curtaine, now* D: *curtaine; now* Dyce.

255. *prate—my*'] no stop in ABC: *prate;—my* D: *prate. My* Dyce Sampson.

256. *repet*[*it*]*ion* BCD: *repetion* A.

271. *in* A: *an* BCD Dyce Sampson.

*272. *Princes;* [*heare*] BCD Dyce: *Princes heares;* A: *Princes: here's* Dyce (in footnote): ? *Princes heires* Sampson. But comets are baleful rather to princes than to their heirs, who may be rejoicing at the prospect of a speedy succession. There is little to choose between *heare* and *here's*: but the first is a little more dignified and slightly supported by *D.L.* V. 5. 65: "*attend* the sentence of the court"; *A.V.* IV. 1. 338: "*attend* her sentence"; *F.M.I.* III. 2. 180: "*heare* then our sentence".

273. Wrongly given to Vittoria by AB (a good example of the sheep-like copying of B).

278. *Of penitent whoores*'] ends 277 in Qq.

285. *Vit....How?*'] ends 284 in Qq.

287. *th*[*o*]*se* D: *these* ABC Dyce Sampson.

287. [*mawe*] BCD: *mawes* A.

297. [*on*] BCD: *one* A.

305. After this D marks Act. 3. Scen. 3.

322. *you must*'] *you now must* Swinburne. But once alterations are made simply to smooth Webster's metre, there is no end to the process.

329. *thou...woes*—'] separate line in Qq.

333. *As...live?*'] ends 332 in Qq.

338. Assigned to *Fran.* in AB.

344. The sense seems slightly better with the question-mark: and these are omitted so regularly by the Qq that the alteration is as slight as it is possible to be.

III. 3.

S.D. [*Marcello, and Lodovico*]] Sampson delays their entrance till that of the Savoy Ambassador. But Flamineo would hardly feign madness to the empty air, without someone to hear him.

21. *Yo*[*n*]] *you* ABC: *your* D Dyce Sampson. *Yon* is a simpler alteration and goes well with *marke*; the same confusion of *you* and *yon* recurs in V. 2. 50; V. 3. 20.

29. Dyce adds "*Exeunt Ambassadors*"; this is probably right, but they may remain in the background till the end of the scene. After all the company might well want to make the most, from a spectacular point of view, of their gorgeous clothes.

46. *them practize* Dyce (*i.e.* "them that practize"): *them; practize* Qq (in which case *them* must refer to *Jewes*; which is however a long way away).

49. [*a*] BCD: A omits.

72. *Shalt...housekeeping?*] ends 71 in Qq.

75–6. In Qq lines end with *faces* | *pillowes*.

79. [*Enter Antonelli and Gasparo.*]] A has *Enter Antonelli* at 91. But *yon couple* in 80 needs explanation; and Dyce's idea that it refers to the Duke and Cardinal seems untenable. *Wee are observed* implies that the *couple* are present on the stage.

*86. [*rogue*] CD: *grine rouge* A: *gue* A_1B Dyce Sampson. Sampson suggests that *grine* was mis-written for *gue* or *gueux*; then *rogue* written after it as a correction and misprinted *rouge*. But it is simpler to suppose that *rogue* has been misprinted twice over, first as *grine*, then more successfully as *rouge*. In *grine* the *n* would be merely an inverted *u*, as so often; and the confusion of *i* and *o* is easy enough. *Gue*, on the other hand, is in any case a dubious sort of word, being found elsewhere only in two passages of Richard Braithwaite (see Nares, *Glossary*: *N.E.D.*). However the *gue* of A_1 seems here at all events an intended correction of A: and if it is a correction, we might expect the correction to be right. Still, it is possible that in clearing up the muddle *grine rouge*, the compositor cleared out two letters too many and left *gue* where he meant *rogue*. It will be seen that some of the later corrections are certainly bungled in the making (cf. IV. 1. 96–7; IV. 2. 108).

IV. 1.

(D, Act. 3. Scen. 4.)

2. *brid*[*e*]*'s* BCD: *brid's* A (a form not given after the 13th century in *N.E.D.*).

45. *Enter Mont.*] printed a line lower in A.

46. [*presents etc.*] A_1BCD: A omits. In sig. G (III. 3. 133–IV. 2. 148) A_1 becomes a better text than A. Thus A misprints *life* for *list* in 93 below, *Sir* for *O sir* at IV. 2. 70, *ten* for *two* at IV. 2. 108.

48. CD give to *Fra.*

48–51. CD Dyce Sampson print as two lines of blank verse (S. suggests easing the metre by reading *Some* for *And some, and next* for *Next*). But the unusual arrangement of A may, it seems to me, be meant to mark Monticelso's deliberation of speech and frequent pauses as he turns the pages.

82. [*one*] A_1BCD: *and* A. A_1 is here of more authority. See on 46 above.

85. *wont were* A: *were wont* BCD.

93. *li*[*st*] A_1BCD Sampson: *life* A: ? *file* Dyce: *list* is clearly right.
96–7. *That* (*in*) *so little*...*Should* (*lie*) BCD Dyce: *That so little*...*Should be* A Sampson: *That so in little*...*Should lie* A_1. See on 46. A_1 gives a correction, though slightly bungled.
104. [*Call*] A_1BCD Dyce: *Looke* A Sampson. See on 46.
106. *I —d' foot* A Sampson: *I ha't*— A_1BCD Dyce (with minor variations): perhaps *d' foot* was merely altered as profane.
112. *which* AB: *which yet* CD Dyce Sampson (*metri gratia*). It would be possible, though ugly, to read *all which*, supposing haplography with *supernaturall*: or *a*, omitted several times in the play, could be inserted before *cause*.
126. *he writes.*] opposite 128 in A.
143. *Exit* D: *Exit Mon.* ABC.

IV. 2.

(C, Act 4. D, Actus Quartus. Scena Prima.)

11. *Enter Brachiano*] C omits, D Dyce Sampson place at 15. But there seems no reason why Brachiano should not enter here and stand watching in silence while the servant completes the delivery of the letter. Indeed it is all the more dramatic.
17. Sampson makes this prose address into verse by moving *Ha?* to the previous, *Vittoria* to the following, line.
24. *Florence*] ends 23 in Qq.
41–2. One line in Qq.
46. *What? what* AD: *That? what* BC: *That what* Dyce (needlessly).
*51. [*In*], *you Pandar!*] *In you Pandar?* A_1: *No you Pandar?* A Dyce Sampson: *E'en you Pandar* B: *You! Pandar!* CD. A_1 is here our better authority (see on IV. 1. 46); the *?* for *!* is nothing unusual; and *In* is certainly more dramatic. As he speaks, Brachiano points towards Vittoria's door. Besides this goes better with the next line—*am I your dog?*
70. [*O*] *sir* A_1BCD Dyce: *Sir* A Sampson.
72. Here Greg and Sampson mark a new scene. The curtain of the inner stage is drawn back, without any break: and it is essential that the tension should not be interrupted.
*86. [*lovely*] A_1BCD Dyce: *thought on* A Sampson. The alternatives may well have been Webster's own: *To mee* goes slightly better with *lovely*: and see on IV. 1. 46 for the decisive reason.
89. *christall!* Dyce: *christall?* AB Sampson. But clearly here, as *passim*, the Elizabethan *?* = our *!*.
97. [*W*]*ee'ld* Sampson: *ee'ld* A: *Wee'l* B: *Weel* C: *We'l* D: *Ye'd* Dyce.
*101. *Thy* ABC: *My* D Dyce Sampson. But surely the words refer to the fickle looseness of Vittoria, on whom Brachiano here turns angrily.
*108. [*two*] Dyce: *tow* A_1: *ten* A Sampson: *the* BCD. It is just worth noting that A misprints 10 for *two* at V. 1. 200, where there is no doubt that *two* is right. Possibly both there and here Webster wrote *to* (= two), which was misread as 10. See on IV. 1. 46.
131. *Vittoria!*] ends 130 in Dyce Sampson.
135. *matches* A: *matchles* B: *matchless* CD Dyce Hazlitt (failing to see the joke).
158. *would* ABCD: *could* A_1. A regains the superiority here in sig. H. Cf. IV. 3. 62–3.
183. *Is*...*a great bridge* AB: *Is like*...*London-Bridge* CD.

184–6. In Qq two lines ending with *men!* | *infancie.*
195. *Stop her mouth*] separate line in Qq.
*206. [*Stay—ingratefull Rome!*]] *Stay ingratefull Rome.* ABC Sampson: *Stay, ingrateful Rome!* D (equivalent to the present text): *Stay in ingrateful Rome!* Dyce: *Stay in grateful Rome!* Brereton (ironically, to Vittoria = "stay in this amiable city, if you will not fly with me"). Both Dyce's and Brereton's readings are impossibly abrupt: the question of staying or not staying in Rome must have more introduction than this.

Staying in ingratefull Rome? seems to me just possible—"Do you bid me supply my promises with deeds, and dally with Vittoria, while remaining in such a place of peril for us as Rome?"—(the *-ing* being lost by haplography). But I should prefer, though far from satisfied, *Stay—ingratefull Rome! i.e.* "Stay!—I had forgotten (my danger here in) ingrateful Rome". Brachiano here wakes suddenly from his pleasant dreams of love renewed. *Stay!* is then parallel to *Soft!* in the next line but one. For a similar confusion, cf. *All's Well that Ends Well*, II. 1. 50, where F_1 has *Stay the king*; Ff_{2-4} (rightly I think) *Stay: the king.* Webster uses *Stay* thus elsewhere: cf. *D.L.* V. 5. 10.
206. *Rome! it deserves*] begins 207 in Qq.

IV. 3.

(D, Act. 4. Scen. 2.)

S.D. *Enter* ∧ *Lodovico etc.*] *Enter Francisco, Lodovico etc.* Qq. It seems more sensible to omit *Francisco* here, rather than strike out the whole of the next line in AB—*At another dore...Florence*, with Dyce and Sampson: for it is quite an important stage-direction.
19. *Lod. Here my Lord*] ends 18 in AB.
*23. [*Who's*] *this...?*] *Whose this?* Qq Dyce Sampson. But the answer to this question would be "My Lord Cardinall of Burbon's", not "*For* my Lord Cardinall". The correction *Who's this* (*for*)*?* is an easy, though not indispensable one: cf. *D.M.* II. 3. 10: *Whose there?* A, for *Who's there?* Similarly *A.V.* III. 1. 21: *Whose that?* Q, for *Who's that?*
61–2. *Enter Monticelso*] Here D marks Act. 4. Scen. 3.
62–3. *Concedimus...peccator*[*u*]*m*] A_1 omits: *peccatorem* A.
*67. *seate* ABCD: *state* A_1 Dyce; but cf. *Mon. Hon.* 373. And for sig. H (IV. 2. 149–V. 1. 38) A becomes again our better authority. Thus A_1 omits the benediction in 62–3, the stage directions at 81–2, *Mon.* at 83.
76. I have added the question-mark, which Qq and edd. all omit.
83–4. A_1 gives to *Fran.*
86. ABC repeat *Enter Monticelso.*
92. *I aske you*] given to *Lod.* by AB, which print it as a separate line.
126. *sh*[*o*]*wers* BCD: *shewers* A.
128. *With all* CD: *Withall* AB.
132. *by reason*] begins 133 in Qq.
137. [*him*] Dyce added.
138. *Ser. Sir.*] ends 137 in Qq.
140. *wil*[*s*] BCD: *will* A.
141–2. One line in Qq.
153. *arm'd now. Now*] ? *arm'd. Now* Sampson: *arm'd now* Brereton.

V. 1.

(D, Act. 4. Scen. 4.)

25. *Hard penance*] separate line in Qq.
26. *Hee is*] ends 25 in Qq.
30. AB add *Enter Duke Brachiano.*
40. After this D marks Act. 4. Scen. 5.
40. S.D. *Farnese* AB: CD omit: *Marcello* Sampson. Farnese neither speaks nor is spoken of: but he cannot simply on that account be changed into Marcello. Cf. Jaques the Moor, Christophero, Guid-antonio, Forobosco.
44. *sorr*[*ie*] BCD: *sorrow* A.
45. *those*] ?*these*. A common confusion: *e.g.* cf. III. 2. 287.
60. Qq assign to *Fran.*: Dyce corrects.
61–3. [*Lod.*]...[*Gas.*] CD: *Car....Ped.* AB. (Carlo and Pedro being their assumed names in disguise.)
65. *proprietie* AB: *dexterity* CD.
*144. *since*] the sense seems to require *ere*, *i.e.* "*before* he rose in the world"; *once ere* might have become telescoped owing to the similarity of *nce* and *ere* in Elizabethan writing; and then misread as *since*.
158. *sounder lover* BCD Dyce Sampson: *sounder, lover* A.
*165. *loath* ABC: *love* D Dyce Sampson. *Love* may seem a certain correction in view of Flamineo's reply. But I take Zanche to mean that a little paint and finery *on her rivals* is enough to make Flamineo loath herself in comparison (stress *me*): which Flamineo at once denies. With the reading *love*, it is not at all clear why Zanche should make such a self-disparaging remark. She seems to me to be carrying on her previous complaint—"your love to me rather cooles then heates". To which Flamineo replies that her rivals are only shadows while she is the solid flesh, and he will not be so foolish as Aesop's dog. See Commentary.
169. *Di*[*n*]*ers* Sampson: *Diuers* (Divers) Qq Dyce.
169. I have added the question-mark.
177. *mo*[*r*]*ality* D Dyce Sampson: *mortality* ABC.
189. *You*['*re*]] *Your* A (with the same meaning, of course).
200. [*two*] BCD: 10 A. Possibly Webster wrote *to* (= *two*): see on IV. 2. 108.
201. *Doe* ACD Sampson: *Doe,* B Dyce.
**201. *like the geesse in the progresse* A: *gesse* BC: *gess* D: *geese* edd. This is very obscure: see Commentary for attempts to explain it as it stands.

Conjectures may connect the words *like...progresse* either (1) with *Doe* or (2) with *you know where you shall finde mee.*

Under (1) *Guise* might be read for *geesse*. Webster wrote a play about him; and he was assassinated in a palace (at Blois), like Marcello (Flamineo's words would have to be an aside). But *in the progresse* remains unexplained.

Or (2), placing a stop after *doe* (with B), we might conjecture *like the gestes* or *gesses in the progresse, you know where you shall finde mee. Gestes* was the technical name for the stopping-places (Fr. *gîtes*) in royal progresses, or for the lists of them which were drawn up beforehand and sent on to the mayors of the towns concerned; and also published in the royal household whence courtiers hastened to send them to their friends, who were anxious to know beforehand "the gestes in the progresse" (see Chambers, *Eliz. Stage*, I. 108). Thus Edward VI speaks in his journal of "the gestis of my progres"; Quarles, *Sol. Recantat.* VII. 52 has the phrase "gests of progresse"; and J. Norden (1596) calls a work of his "A Progresse

of Pietie,whose Jesses lead into the Harborough of heavenly Hearts-ease". *N.E.D.*, which quotes these, gives also plural forms *gesses*, *geasts*, which are palaeographically even nearer to *geesse*. Shakespeare uses the word in a slightly different sense (= *time* of stay) in *Winter's Tale*, I. 2. 41. (Ff_{3-4} misread *guest*.) Consulting Steevens's note on this last passage, in search of any final scraps of evidence, I found to my surprise that, though no edition of Webster has ever noted it, he quotes this very line of the *W.D.* in illustration, silently inserting *gestes*, as I have proposed, in place of *geesse*.

I have little doubt that *gestes* is right.

203. *noble, friend* A Sampson: *noble friend* BCD Dyce. Cf. v. 6. 121.
208, 217, 222. *F[r]a.* CD: *Fla.* AB. Similarly elsewhere.
209–10. Printed as two lines of verse in Qq, the second beginning at *in*.

V. 2.

(D, Act. 4. Scen. 6.)

2. [*You*] *Your* A.
20–1. *Hort.* [*Lod. Gasp.*] *Car. Hort. Pedro* A: *Cor. Hort. Pedro* B: *Hort.* CD. (Lodovico and Gasparo being disguised under the names of Carlo and Pedro.)
26. [*wider*] D: *wilder* ABC.
31. [*Lod.*] *Car.* (= *Lod.*) A: *Cor.* BC: *Hort.* D Sampson.
37. *earth;* AD Sampson: *earth,* BC Dyce (who puts a colon after *is* in the preceding line).
44–5. *Page,*] As at 65 the Page contradicts Cornelia's story of the murder, his entrance should perhaps be marked at the beginning of the scene.
50. *you* AB: *yon* CD.
68. *T'lose this: for that...*] Dyce ingeniously omits the colon; *that* then = "that which". But the change is not essential.
74–5. *Thou shalt...hang'd*] as prose in Qq.

V. 3.

(D, Actus Quintus. Scena Prima.)

9. *rev[e]ls* BCD: *reuls* A.
20. *yon* AC: *you* BD. (CD *scritch-owl.*)
40. *infinitely*] *most* is added before this by MS. hand in A.
41–6. Can be divided, as Sampson observes, into blank-verse lines of a sort ending with *see* | *Princes* | *Townes* | *unhospitable* | *now* | *bodies* | *invisible.*
65. [*Wilt*]] *Will't* Qq.
80. *Enter Brachiano.* Greg (*Mod. Lang. Quart.* III. 122) marks here a new scene, supposing that, as often in such cases, the curtains of the "Study" are drawn revealing Brachiano in bed. But *heere he comes* implies that Brachiano is actually carried in. It may be that the "Study" was still occupied by the properties of the Barriers.
121–4. As prose in Qq.
124. *cat[c]her* BCD: *cather* A.
138. *H[a]llowed* CD: *Hollowed* AB.
145. *l[æ]vum* CD: *levum* A.
148–9. [*Gasparo*] BCD: *Gasparao or* A.
157–8. As prose in Qq.
170. *Vittoria! Vittoria!* BCD: *Vittoria? Vittoria!* A (a good instance of the indiscriminate use of *?* for *!*).

171. *Come* A Sampson: *comes* BCD Dyce. After this D marks Act. 5. Scen. 2.
183. [*Fra.*]] *Flo.* (Florence) in AB; and so at intervals throughout the scene.
198. *knave—*] *knave,* ABC. The comma, though right on the Elizabethan system, is ambiguous: for it looks as if Flamineo were calling Francisco "my quaint knave".
201. [*f*]*eat* BCD: *seat* A.
201. *trice—*] *trice:* Dyce Sampson, thereby obscuring the sense. See Commentary. (No stop in A.)
202. *-honestie*] followed by a comma (slightly ambiguous) in Qq.
209. *Uds' death, I*] Sampson transfers to end 208.
215. *Exit Flamineo.*] opposite 216 in ABC.
220. *infernall, that*] *infernall hag* Daniel (needlessly: *infernall* has plenty of authority for its use as a noun).
*220. [*us*] D: *up* ABC Dyce Sampson. The *p* may be due to confusion with the *p* of *sport.* (Sampson's collation misses D's reading and I only found it after making this conjecture independently.)
224. [*Zan.*]] called *Moo.* or *Moore* throughout this scene by AB.
241. *to it here*] A: *to t here* (for *to't here*) A_1: *to there* B.
256. [*Zan.*] *Most true!*] begins 257 in Qq.
259. *counsell?* Dyce: *counsell.* Qq Sampson.
275. *Chappel?* Dyce: *Chappel.* Qq Sampson. *You'le...midnight* forms a separate line in Qq.

V. 4.

(D, Act. 5. Scen. 3.)

21. [*Anaxarchus*] H. D. Sykes: *Anacharsis* Qq edd. It is of course possible that the mistake was Webster's own: see Commentary.
26. *d*[*e*]*cimo* BCD: *dicimo* A.
30–2. As prose in Qq.
36. *to the* Qq Sampson: ? *or to the* Dyce, on the ground that Castle Angelo was in Rome, whereas the scene is in Padua. As however the audience probably thought instinctively, and were meant to think, of the Tower of London, as the equivalent of St Angelo, the *or* is not really needed in the text.
46. *me*[*e*]*tst* D Dyce: *metst* ABC Sampson.
59. Here D marks Act. 5. Scen. 4.
72. *make much* Qq: ? *take much* Sampson. But we do not need anything so literal: cf. 1. 1. 60—"pray make use of it".
73. *more*] ? *none* Daniel. But Cornelia clearly means "I have left some more for myself". Surely she needed it.
83–4. As prose in Qq.
88. *Unto her lute*] ends 87 in Qq.
118 ff. The S.D., like many in the play, is badly clipped in A, and here restored from B, except that Dyce added *in his hand.*

V. 5.

(D, Act. 5. Scen. 5.)

15. [*oft*] BCD: *of't* A.

V. 6.

7. *the fury*] ? *thy.* Though Webster often uses *fury* = *fiend.* Cf. 137 below.
18, 29. *the*[*y*] BCD: *the* A.

*44. *Foole* [*that*] *thou*] *Foole, thou* Qq: *Foole thou* Dyce Sampson. *That* seems to me to be needed and betters the metre. Cf. II. 1. 28.

92. [*one*] BCD: *none* A.

97–8. *my brest...your owne*] *your brests...my owne* Brereton. This conjecture seems based on a mistaken idea that there are only *three* pistols; there are *four* ("two case of pistols") and Vittoria and Zanche are each to aim one pistol at Flamineo, the other at herself.

108–13. It is possible, but not very profitable, to divert oneself chopping this into blank verse.

*133. *me...starre,*] *me...starre:* Dyce (with same sense): *me,...starre,* Sampson (*i.e.* "make me tremble as before a blazing star". But why should Vittoria tremble in her triumph?). A possible (but, I think, needless) change would be *men* (which might be written *mē*) for *me*—"The fearful example of thy death shall make *men* tremble as before a comet". Cf. Middleton, *Five Gallants,* III. 3. 23–4:

> When he's in such a plight, and clear from me[n],
> I'll do that I'm ashamed to speak till then.

142. *Fla. O I smell soote,*] begins 143 in Qq.

143. *s[t]inking* BCD: *sinking* A.

147. *Th[o]rough* Dyce: *Through* Qq Sampson.

162. *pre[ce]dent*] *president* A (the same word, but the old spelling is ambiguous and has therefore been changed throughout).

167. *Lod. Gasp.* [*disguised*]] *Lod. Gasp. Pedro, Carlo.* AB: *Lod. Gasp.* C.

172. [*Gas.*] CD: *Con.* AB: *Carlo.* Dyce: ? *Lod.* Sampson (who argues that, as Isabella's lover, Lodovico is the likelier to cry her name). Certainly *Car.* is the easiest correction of *Con.*: and earlier in the play (cf. v. 1. 61–3) Carlo = Lodovico. But in this scene Webster seems to have forgotten that and clearly uses Carlo = Gasparo at 228.

201. *greev's*] *grieves* Dyce. But Sampson explains "grieves us": this I cannot believe. An apostrophe is quite common with the third person singular in A.

222. *Ile meete thy weapon.*] ends 221 in Qq.

228. [*Gas.*] Sampson: *Car.* Qq.

240. *That made it.*] ends 239 in Qq.

261–2. Sampson, feeling this couplet to be an anticlimax after Vittoria's last great speech, queries giving it to Zanche. (This, of course, involves also moving the stage-direction *Vittoria dyes.*) But the speech is not at all like Zanche, with her complete amorality: whereas the hero of *The Duchess of Malfi* dies with almost the same final utterance (*D.M.* v. 4. 84). 'And let my Sonne flie the courts of princes". So that Webster would hardly have agreed that it was unworthy of his heroine here; and we cannot start tampering with the text merely to suit our own aesthetic preferences.

265. *wi[v]es*] *wides* A.

270. *c[a]ught* BCD: *cought* A.

286. *Lod. Yes, thy unckle*] begins 287 in AB.

290. In Qq ends with *Ha!.*

290. [*Gas.*] CD: *Car.* AB: *Lod.* Sampson. But though Carlo = Lodovico earlier throughout the play, at 228 Carlo is clearly Gasparo.

300–3. Greg suggests assigning this speech to the English mbassador, in which case *my honoured Lord* is addressed to Giovanni. But the text is fairly satisfactory as it stands, with *my honoured Lord* meaning the English Ambassador. Nor need we alter *Lord* to *Lords* with Dyce.

The final prose note occurs only in AB: CD have simply the line of Martial.

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